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OCTOBER 1990

A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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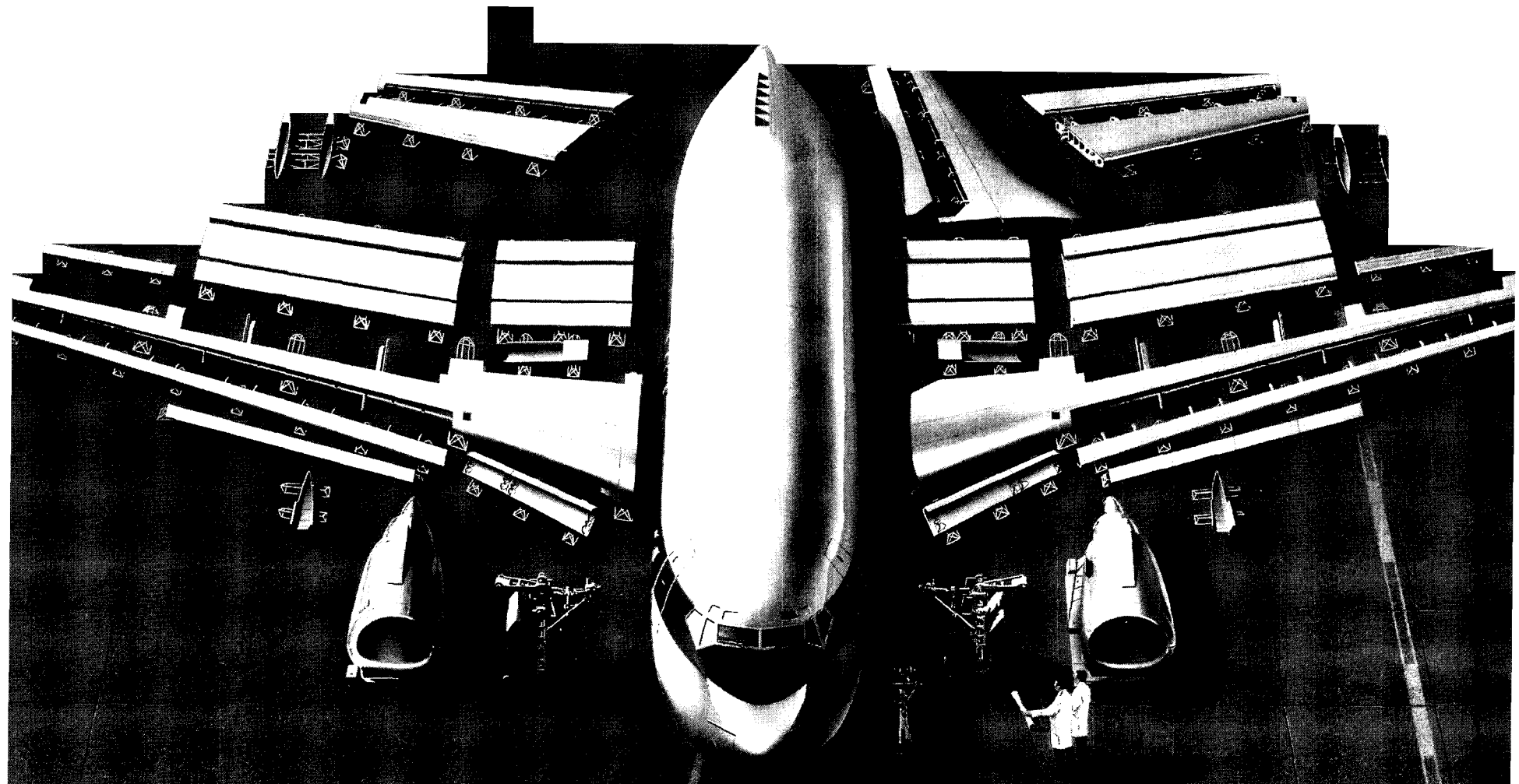

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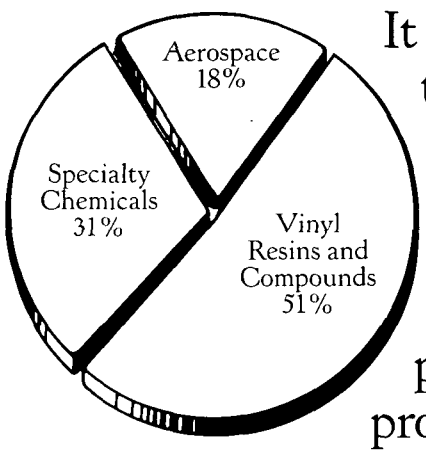


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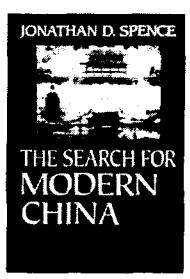


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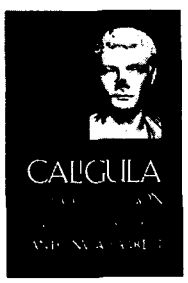


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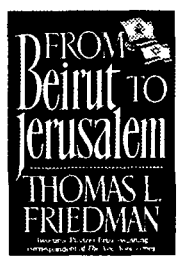


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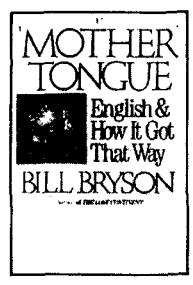


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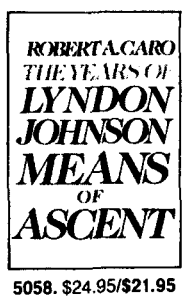


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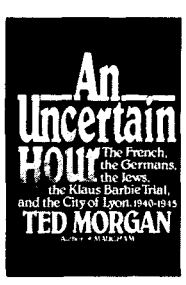


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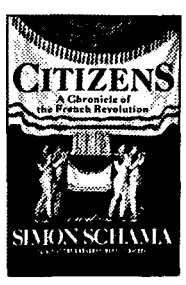


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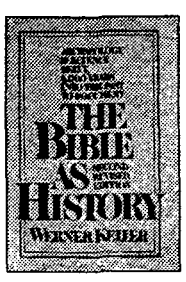


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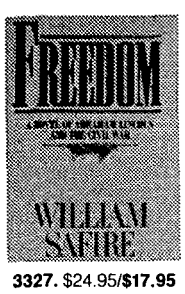


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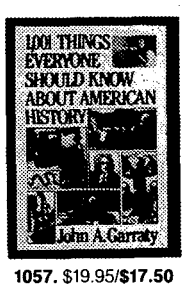


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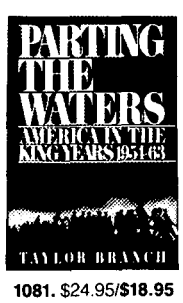


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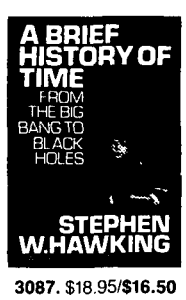


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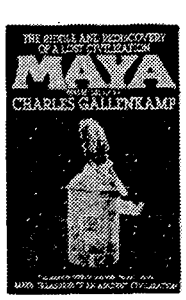


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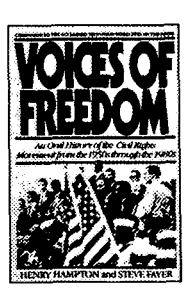


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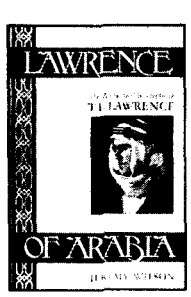


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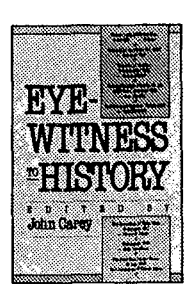


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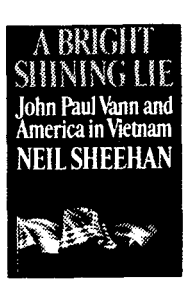


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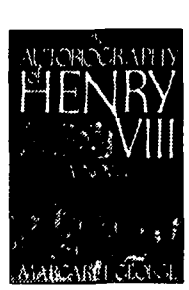


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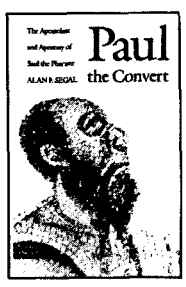


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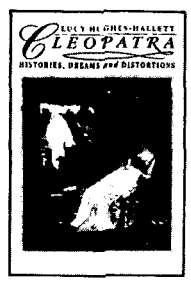


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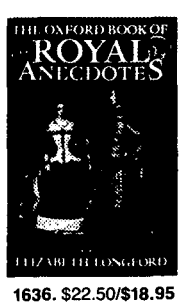


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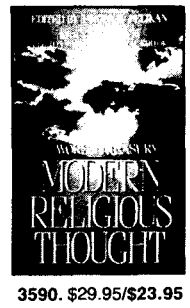


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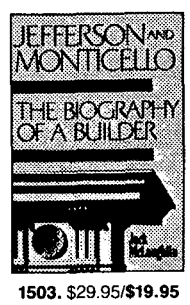


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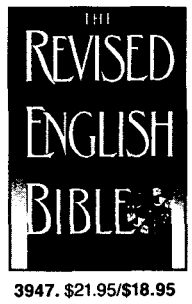


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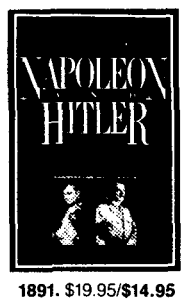


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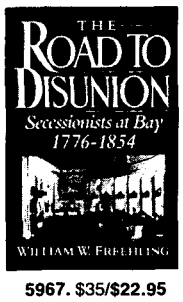


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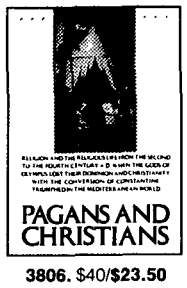


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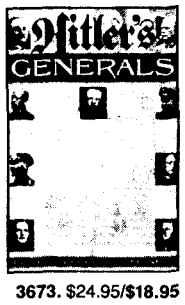


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# Soviet-Jewish Migration to Israel

## Why do the Arabs fear it and fight it?

There are 2 to 3 million Jews living in the Soviet Union today. Under the Soviet Communist system, their culture and their religion have been ruthlessly suppressed for decades. Emigration was virtually impossible. Lately, under glasnost and the more enlightened leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the gates of emigration have begun to open. Most of the emigrants choose Israel as their destination. All Arabs — and not just the "Palestinians" — are unanimous and strident in their opposition to this immigration. What motivates them? What is their concern?

### What are the facts?

■ Israel was created for a specific purpose. It is the ingathering of Jews from all over the world, especially those who had been subject for centuries to hostility, violence, oppression, ghettoization, expulsion and — eventually, the unprecedented disaster of the Holocaust, in which 6 million Jews perished. The yearning for the re-establishment of the Jewish homeland in what came to be called "Palestine" had been unremitting over the centuries. In 1917, the British were in control of Palestine and issued the Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of "...a national home for Jewish people". This Declaration was confirmed by the League of Nations. The concept of Palestine as a Jewish state was further confirmed by the United Nations, which recognized the new-born Jewish state in 1948.

■ During the second World War, many of the millions of Jews that died in the gas chambers of the Nazis could have been saved if they had been allowed into Palestine. The British, however, under the unrelenting threats of the Arabs, buckled under that pressure and effectively throttled Jewish emigration to Israel, thus condemning many to horrible deaths. The situation today is comparable: Under "glasnost" the virulent history-old anti-Semitism of the Russians and the new-found hatreds in the Islamic parts of the Soviet Union subject the Jewish population to imminent great physical danger and possible pogroms. Emigration to Israel is the only solution.

■ The Arab world has regarded this exodus with undisguised hostility and has urged the Soviet Union to stop emigration to Israel altogether. The pretext for this hostility and opposition is the alleged fear that the Soviet-Jewish immigrants will settle in the administered territories, thus threatening the Palestinian inhabitants and their future hopes for a homeland. But, this is a false charge. The Israeli government gives no incentives to any of the immigrants to move to those areas. Fewer than 1% of all Soviet-Jewish immigrants have moved into the territories.

■ The concern of the Arab states, virtually all of which (with the notable exception of Egypt) consider themselves in a state of war with Israel and which have the destruction of Israel at the very top of their agendas, is not with the "Palestinians". In fact, the "Palestinians" and their aspiration for a homeland are a matter of some indifference to the Arab nations, a pretext for the enmity to Israel. If they were truly concerned about the "Palestinians" and their well-being, they would not have suffered their staying in refugee camps for over forty years, in conditions of utter misery. The real reason is the basic Arab view that the existence of Israel on any land that is considered "sacred Arab soil" is considered a Western plot against Islam and the Arab world and that the destruction of Israel is a sacred religious duty, which calls for "jihad" (holy war) against the "infidels". Even if Israel could be induced to grant the "Palestinians" their mini-state, it would not change the hostility of the Arab nations one iota. Their aim would still be the destruction of Israel, except that, with a Palestinian state, in Israel's heartland, the Arab armies would only be minutes away from Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv, and from the military, industrial, and population centers of the country.

The mass immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel would strengthen Israel. Anything that strengthens Israel is perceived by the Arabs as weakening them and thus making more difficult the planned destruction and dismemberment of the Jewish state. The prospect of Jewish immigration strikes terror in Arab hearts. That explains the hysterical statements and saber rattlings at the recent Arab summit in Baghdad. It explains Arab pressure on the Soviet Union to halt this emigration. It explains why, under Arab pressure, the Soviet Union does not allow direct flights from and to Israel; it explains pressure and threats to blow up commercial aircraft of those countries bordering the Soviet Union that may permit transshipment of Soviet Jews to Israel. Israel was created to be a refuge and homeland to persecuted Jews anywhere in the world. During the second World War, the world stood idly by and did not allow Jews to enter Palestine, which could have saved millions. Nothing like it can be allowed to happen again. Soviet Jews are in imminent mortal danger. They want to leave the Soviet Union and go to Israel. Despite Arab frenzied opposition, the world must see to it that nothing happens to slow this exodus.

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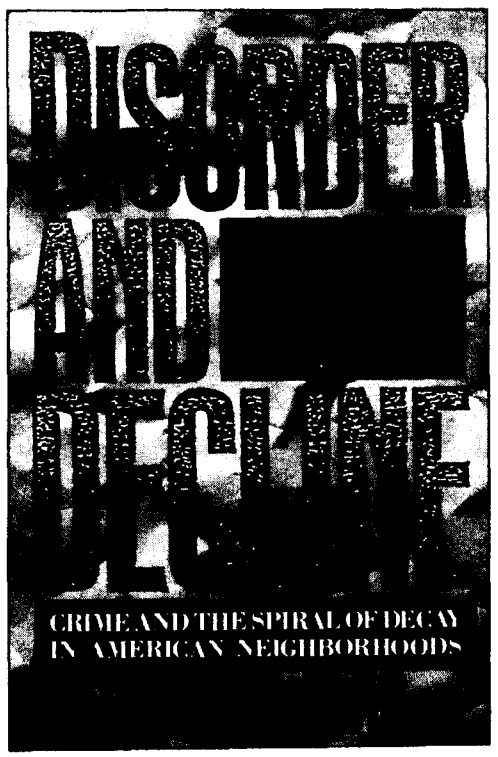


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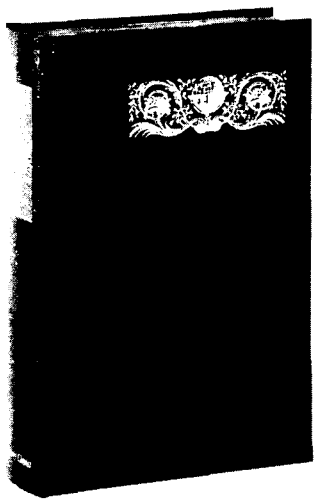

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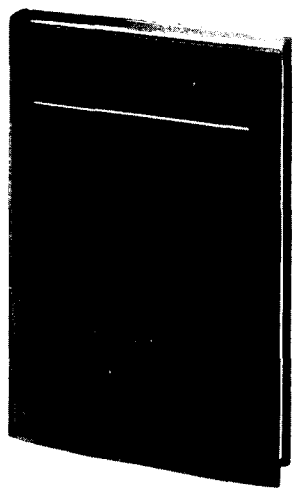

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# THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• On August 2 the Iraqi tyrant Mr. Saddam Hussein sent 170,000 of his troops to requisition Kuwait and choice real estate in Saudi Arabia, thus creating on the Kuwaiti-Saudi border the Middle East's largest concentration of amoebic dysentery. With unanticipated alacrity President George Herbert Walker Bush orchestrated a worldwide embargo against Iraq and sent an American expeditionary force to Saudi Arabia. Soon the astonished Saddam Hussein found himself the object of a naval interdiction of all trade with his country, including many Porta-Johns urgently needed by his embattled army. Jordan's King Hussein (no relation) undertook an immediate diplomatic mission to Washington, hoping to prevent hostilities and perhaps secure for the Iraqis adequate supplies of Kaopectate. But the American buildup in the desert continued, and as health hazards multiplied around the fortifications of the unsanitary Iraqis, it seemed increasingly likely that units of the World Health Organization would be summoned to assist any Iraqi pullout and to disinfect those smelly encampments.

• Those American reformers always in such a lather about "white-collar crime" must have thrown little festivals in their hearts when the Internal Revenue Service in Omaha, Nebraska, weighed exhuming the corpse of a recently deceased tax dodger, Mr. Ehsanolla Motaghed, to confirm that he is indeed dead and not engaged in another of his clever ruses. Then, too, there are Mr. Motaghed's gold fillings. The infelicitously named Rep. Floyd H. Flake (D-N.Y.) and his lovely wife Margaret pleaded not guilty to outrageous and unconscionable charges that this 45-year-old man of the cloth had diverted $141,700 from his Allen African Methodist Church, of which he is pope, and from its associated Allen Senior Citizens Apartments—built with a $10 million federal loan—to his own purposes. The Rev. Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition, Inc. was sued in D.C. Superior Court by Tommy's Limousine, Inc. in an attempt to collect $14,586.36—the unpaid remnant of a $22,317.73 bill rung up by the Rev. J. J. in the summer of 1989, when he used a limousine practically every day to demonstrate an arcane point of his African-American socialist philosophy. Elsewhere politicians were giving of themselves in August, or at least promising to. In Italy, perhaps the most famous member of parliament, the ecdysiast Miss Ilona Staller, announced a peace plan for the Middle East. "I am available," the blond beauty declaimed, "to make love with Hussein to achieve peace. I am willing to let him have his way with me if in exchange he frees the hostages." It could get kinky, Miss Staller!

• The animal rights movement was presented with a vivid demonstration of the unkind treatment accorded animals by bipeds early in the month in Brazil, where Mr. Ray Santos, a politician running for state representative, was bitten by a rat during a televised campaign appearance. Mr. Santos promptly reciprocated, notifying the rat, which he held by its tail, that "Starting now, we begin our campaign against rats." Subsequently Mr. Santos received eight antirabies injections, a consideration denied the rat, who has yet to be located by concerned citizens or potential supporters in the animal rights movement. In Washington, D.C., the court declared a mistrial on twelve of fourteen counts in the drug trial of Mayor Marion Barry. The astute Mr. Barry immediately called for a city-wide healing process. If the process works, Mr. Barry will be mayor-for-life, for he is the city's leading heel. Supporters of Senator Jesse Helms's reelection campaign have filed a complaint with the FEC against "The Oral Majority," a homosexual organization that is harassing the senator and, incidentally, not being exactly up front with the public. Candor and proper regard for public health should admonish the senator's antagonists to rechristen their group "The Anal and Oral Majority," thereby providing a full account of their amorous rites.

• The movement away from accepting personal responsibility for one's dubious behavior continues. Researchers in Englewood, Colorado, led by Dr. I. Kaufman Arenberg are attempting to convince the public that the simian daubings of the late Mr. Vincent van Gogh are not the artist's fault. Like the alcoholic's aberrant behavior, Mr. van Gogh's paintings are, according to these researchers, symptoms of Miniere's disease, an inner-ear malady conducing to vertigo, deafness, erratic vision, and nausea, hence that ghastly "Wheatfield With Crows" thing. What possible good can come from such sophistry? Vincent van Gogh was a very untidy man, with the manners of an Adolf Hitler and none of the redeeming qualities of our own Mapplethorpe or Serrano, the Michelangelo of the urinary tract. And, incidentally, the *Wall Street Journal* on August 9 reported on an art museum worthy of a fat grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Just a mile from Washington's Smithsonian museums, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hughes' frequently overlooked Potato Museum has shut its doors to the 500 or more tourists who for fifteen years have been flocking to it under what delusions one can scarcely imagine. Possibly they are English tourists in search of some good home cooking.

• A fire cut off electricity throughout lower Manhattan, and three of the men who brutally assaulted the Central Park jogger were found guilty of serious breaches of the peace. In Amherst, Massachusetts, new high school guidelines against "sexual harassment" will make it *malum prohibitum* to exchange "intimate" sexual gossip in school hallways or to "stare or to leer with sexual overtones"—prohibitions that will make the school year long and tedious for Amherst's vaunted high school cheerleaders. East German soldiers will no longer march the goose step, according to Defense Minister Rainer Eppelmann. German progressives have protested that the goose step is repugnant to democratic values, and animal rights activists have long posited that it is painful to the geese.

• In New York State, sportsmen are complaining that conflict of interest statutes were flouted when Governor Mario Cuomo signed into law legislation banning dwarf-tossing and dwarf-bowling. In Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Mr. Mark A. Peterson, 29, has pled not guilty to raping simultaneously two of a woman's twenty-one personalities in the congested back seat of his car last June. In London, a hot, dry summer has pig specialists worried that the famed porkers of the Cotswolds are failing to copulate. Mr. Mike Williamson, an authority at the Cotswold Pig Development Company, advises farmers that boars and sows will be less reluctant to mate if they "freshen up" by having buckets of mud thrown on them—though caution must be exercised lest farmers spill the powerful aphrodisiac on themselves.

• On August 28 the College Board released test data demonstrating that college-bound high school seniors had recorded the lowest reading scores in a decade, which is good news when one considers the appalling stuff they will be asked to read if they attend such benighted institutions as Stanford University or the Patrice Lumumba University of Moscow. The potential dangers of licking toad slime were again manifest after two Canadians, Mr. Garry Murphy and Mr. Paul Cherrie, overindulged themselves on the slime of Mr. Murphy's cane toad. The slime, when properly ingested, produces a mellow high, then violent retching and partial paralysis. It has become very popular among upper-class Canadians and faculty members of the Harvard Law School.

• In Bologna, Italy, Mr. Ettore Maserati, who with his brother Alfieri founded the Maserati automobile company and racing team, died. He was 95. In New York the oldest New Yorker under indictment for murder, Mr. Oliver Barre, 95, died when hit by an express bus. In Santa Barbara, California (where else?), a 92-year-old man died at the wheel upon smacking his 1964 Corvette into a brick wall. And from France comes the sad news that one of the most tireless and intelligent proponents of modern conservatism,



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Mr. Jean-Marie Benoist, has died of stomach cancer. He was 48 and a treasured friend of this magazine.

• Former President Jimmy Carter continues to amaze. Late in the month in Oslo, Norway, at a conference sponsored by the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, the insufferable twit chided the Western democracies for their "personalized hatred" of Mr. Saddam Hussein and for adding him to a historic list of enemies "stripped of any redeeming human characteristics." A few days later, the Rev. Jackson announced immediate plans to fly to Baghdad to interview the unfortunate Mr. Hussein. Meanwhile, Mr. Hussein continued to round up Western civilians and incarcerate them at Iraqi sites likely to be attacked in the event of war. He also forced Western children to participate in propaganda films with him. Viewed a certain way these are acts of peace and humanity, and certainly all Americans can be grateful that Mr. Carter has the leisure time to view them far away from the lusty swales of our nation's capital. *—RET*

# CORRESPONDENCE

**Micah Milhous Morrison**

Micah Morrison's article "Environmental Gore" (*TAS*, August 1990) took me back to the late '60s and the Nixonian paranoia that pervaded the right. Like Nixon, Morrison uses the eccentricities of the fringe elements to denigrate an entire movement. By equating the aborted actions of Earth-Firsters or the alleged enthusiasm for AIDS of "some Deep Ecologists" with the Green Revolution, he is trafficking in the same sensationalist innuendo Nixon used in his attempts to squelch the anti-war movement.

Mr. Morrison's paranoia is further demonstrated when he states that "Greenpeace and the Rainforest Action Network do little to hide their larger agenda of overturning the real culprit in environmental carnage, industrial capitalism." Overturning industrial capitalism is not the aim, nor has it ever been, of any major Environmental Group. Rather, it is the raising of the consciousness of industrial capitalism and making it take responsibility for its actions. The sale of chemical pesticides (whose use is outlawed in the U.S.) by Dupont and other manufacturers to Third World nations demonstrates a total lack of corporate consciousness and responsibility in the pursuit of profit. Bringing this behavior under public scrutiny is the aim of us environmentalists, as any informed journalist well knows.

That Mr. Morrison has swallowed the corporate scam hook, line, and image is demonstrated by his stated belief that "not only has the corporate world jumped on the ecological bandwagon, but Bush will be making a mighty effort to remind voters that he is the environmental President."

The recent marketing binge regarding "degradable" trash bags is evidence superlative of the real motives of the corporate world. After inundating stores with "biodegradable trash bags," manufacturers were required to take them off the shelves when it was demonstrated that they were little better than their non-biodegradable counterparts. Soon afterwards, a spokesman for Mobil Chemical Company, manufacturer of Hefty trash bags, stated that "degradability is just a marketing tool." The corporate world jumped on the bandwagon, when marketing wizards saw polls showing a great majority of Americans put environmental quality at the top of their priorities list for the '90s. Simple greed, Mr. Morrison, not concern for our environment, motivates corporations.

As for Mr. Bush being the environmental President, actions give a far clearer understanding of his real loyalties than reading his lips. Mr. Bush has come foursquare behind the oil industry in his advocacy of Offshore Drilling, even in the face of polls and initiatives on both coasts, indicating that the great majority of citizens favor a complete ban on any further drilling. Seventy percent of Californians recently voted to stop all offshore exploration for oil, yet Bush continues to call for it in the Santa Barbara Channel.

In his enthusiasm to de-green Senator Al Gore, Micah aimed his partisan weapon not only at Gore but also at the Environmental Movement, per se. Obviously duped by corporate flimflam and fitted with blinders, Mr. Morrison set out on this safari with a gun loaded with innuendo, buzz words, and misrepresentation, not to mention a round or two of Nixonian paranoia.

*—Bob Joslin*
*Whitefish, Montana*

Micah Morrison hit the bullseye. As a former Tennesseean, I have followed the politics of the Gore family for years. Albert Gore, Sr. lost his seat in the U.S. Senate when his connections with the Eastern liberal establishment became more important to him than his Tennessee constituency. Similarly, Albert Gore, Jr. is just as liberal as his father, perhaps even more so. In the 1988 presidential primaries, Albert Gore, Jr. recognized this and made rather obvious attempts to "run away from his record." His ploy became so obvious that even his fellow dwarves were calling the matter to his attention. I believe it was Richard Gephardt who said during the campaign: "Al Gore keeps tripping over his own record."

*—Jim Larkins*
*Austin, Texas*

**T. E. vs. R. J.**

R. J. Stove's review of a recent biography of Richard Aldington was very disappointing because it unequivocally endorsed Aldington's spiteful contempt for T. E. Lawrence (*TAS*, August 1990).

Mr. Stove repeats the oft-told account that Aldington's scathing biography of Lawrence received a chilly reception from the "British establishment," despite the fact that "no one could convincingly dispute the truth of Aldington's findings. He had done his research too well."

I hope Mr. Stove has occasion to consult Jeremy Wilson's new biography of Lawrence. In it, Mr. Wilson writes that "Lawrence was not as Aldington claimed, a habitual liar, and [the] *Seven Pillars* is remarkably accurate on questions of fact. Those who had wished in the 1950s to show that Lawrence was pathologically dishonest hoped that the contemporary documents would eventually demonstrate that they were right. In the event, the documents have done exactly the opposite." Mr. Wilson also describes Aldington as an embittered expatriate who believed that if he could destroy Lawrence's reputation this would deeply wound the British establishment. Shouldn't Mr. Stove have treated these matters?

*—Anthony Cavender*
*Houston, Texas*

*R. J. Stove replies:*

Though I haven't yet read Jeremy Wilson's biography (not having been able to obtain a copy by the deadline date for my review), Mr. Cavender's extract fails to address the issues that Aldington raised. Like the denunciations which greeted Aldington's book in 1955, it insists on playing the man rather than playing the ball. You can't dispose of someone's biographical credibility by calling him an expatriate. As for Aldington's alleged embitterment, those who actually saw him on a regular basis during his later years were struck mainly by his singular freedom from bitterness, both before and after *Lawrence of Arabia*. We should not forget that Aldington began as a Lawrence *supporter*.

Nevertheless, I am grateful to Mr. Cavender for alerting me to the Wilson work's claims, and shall be interested to learn how Mr. Wilson copes when he comes to explain the Lawrence Bureau's behavior towards Aldington. If Aldington's account was indeed fallacious, why did it scare the hell out of Lawrence's admirers? Surely the appropriate response would have been either to ignore it or to laugh it away. In fact, the Lawrence Bureau tried desperately to prevent publication altogether. This is a strange way of behaving towards a fraudulent book. It is much more plausible as a response to an accurate one.

Lawrence himself, incidentally, told Bernard Shaw that *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* "was an effort to make history an imaginative thing." He produced several versions of *Seven Pillars*: these differ not only from each other but from the *Secret Dispatches* on the same subject. When Lawrence himself created wholesale confusion about his achievements, is it surprising that Aldington eventually refused to take him at his word?

**Kasten Doubts**

I have no problems with the underlying principles expressed in Senator Robert W. Kasten's article "Moynihan and the Conservatives" (*TAS*, August 1990), but I fail to understand his concern for some folks having to pay twice in any privatization scenario. Without privatization and with no change in payroll taxes, a lot of folks will pay twice, even if Social Security immediately moves to a pay-as-you-go rate of taxation.

Unless I have missed something, the excess dollars presently flowing into the "Trust Fund" are "invested" in the safest securities in the world: U.S. government securities. The invested cash, now in the general fund, is used for general government expenditures, thus making the difference between government receipts and expenditures, The Deficit, appear much smaller than it really is.

As for Social Security, its manager looks at his balance sheet and sees a nice portfolio of Government Securities earning interest and says "all is well." The immediate problem is that since the government makes nothing and therefore creates no wealth, the in-

*(continued on page 49)*



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# EDITORIALS

## THE BUSH RESOLVE

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

George Bush has just completed an act of presidential leadership surpassing any similar effort by an American President in recent times—though only with modern technology could such leadership be imagined, and the fact that there is now no Cold War helped. He has marshaled practically the entire world against an Arab Mussolini, and he did it in a matter of days. He did it without indulging in vainglorious boasts or blood-chilling roars. Perhaps it is time for the commentators to analyze the origin and nature of this deft and knowledgeable leader.

For more than a decade the majority of political commentators have been either misconstruing the character of White House leadership or ignoring it. Ronald Reagan has been repeatedly presented as a blunderer, albeit the luckiest blunderer since Grover Cleveland. George Bush has been portrayed more variously as a "wimp," "Mr. Résumé," a "lapdog," a "befuddled liberal," a "nefarious conservative." For some reason he inspires even more stupidity than Ronald Reagan.

At any rate, without warning and just as Washington was taking its summer siesta, the President was presented with a provocation 6,000 miles away that many American politicians would have sent to the United Nations for extended negotiation. The moralistic dithering of the Carter Administration would only have ended when Iraq had rolled over Saudi Arabia, and there are plenty of Machiavels in Congress today who would act no more decisively were they in the Oval Office.

Bush is cut from a different cloth. He immediately saw that Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait menaced our vital interests, and he took decisive action. Perhaps even more interestingly he has managed an enormous number of variables. In but a couple of days he gathered intelligence reports and reports of military capabilities. He briefed allies, often personally. He coordinated vast military moves worldwide, addressed the concerns of different Arab leaders, and paid his respects to the conventions and interests of the members of the United Nations. Aided by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, he acts as his own Secretary of State. Almost overnight a huge expeditionary force composed of perhaps half a dozen nationalities was headed to the scene of aggression. That is what Churchill would call "action this day."

Now we are hearing a gratuitous undercurrent of foreboding from the pundits: "Oh, it's not going to be easy. . . . Oh, how we botched things with Saddam Hussein six months ago. . . . " These Weisenheimers are playing on the weird pessimism that has afflicted our fellow Americans through what have obviously been some of the most benign years of American history. Imagine the United States and the Soviet Union being in accord over the fate of Saddam Hussein, who until just the other day was a Soviet client? Imagine Syrian forces sharing our goals and maneuvering on the Iraqi border! Six months ago all this would have been unthinkable.

Of course, President Bush's stupendous achievement would not have been possible without the assistance of Saddam Hussein. Had this model tyrant not been oblivious to the changed circumstances of the present he would not have acted in accordance with the ruthless customs of the past. When the Soviets were aiding and encouraging terror and aggression, overthrowing the legitimate government of Kuwait could have been accomplished at much less risk. And, incidentally, Iraq's justification that it acted to liberate the Kuwaiti masses would have been a lot more compelling were Moscow still leading a Marxist-Leninist worldwide chorus.

Unfortunately, Saddam was otherwise engaged in the last days of the Cold War. He has chosen the present to act like a thug from the past. George Bush is showing him that the era of easy international terror and aggression is over. He is using the great naval power that the Reagan Administration built up during the 1980s despite withering criticism. He is sending troops into secret military installations built by us and our allies during the 1980s against just such a contingency as the present.

The vigilant statesmanship of the Reagan-Bush years is again paying off, and its core value is resolve. □

*Adapted from RET's weekly* Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

## NATURE FAKERS

What exquisite timing! Saddam Hussein sends 170,000 soldiers to commandeer 9.44 percent of the world's oil resources (Kuwait) and has designs on another 25.46 percent (Saudi Arabia); and back in sleepy Seabrook, New Hampshire, a Mr. Ron Sher, speaking for the Seabrook nuclear power plant, announces that his heretofore controversial facility has just completed its reactor tests and begun to supply electricity to New England. Each month the plant will produce sufficient electricity for one million homes, eliminating the monthly consumption of 1.5 million barrels of oil.

A mere eight pounds of uranium generates energy equal to 6,000 tons of messy oil. Had we, over the past dozen years, ignored the anti-nuclear hysterics and built more nuclear power plants we could laugh off the gruesome quarrels of irritable Middle Eastern potentates. The French have recognized the prudence of going nuclear, and they now derive 75 percent of their electricity from nuclear reactors. In the 1980s they tripled their nuclear energy capacity while cutting pollutants from their electric power system by approximately 90 percent. Japan has doubled its reliance on nuclear power over the decade. During that period Americans have allowed their nuclear power industry to stagnate. Though we once led the world in nuclear development, and though 20 percent of our electricity has been safely generated by nuclear reactors during the past dozen years, not one utility during that period has sought a license to build a nuclear reactor. One hundred reactor orders have been canceled.

The same procrastination that afflicts Washington's lawmakers in addressing the budget afflicts them in addressing the nation's energy needs. Our recent economic revival would have been impossible without abundant electrical power. Between the Arab oil embargo of 1973 and 1989 our economy grew by about 50 percent. The use of electricity has grown by 54 percent. Most of this electricity has been Made in the USA. In fact 95 percent has been produced either by nuclear energy or by coal, the latter being far less benign toward the environment than nuclear energy. At the time of the 1973 oil embargo 17 percent of our electricity was supplied by oil; five percent was supplied by nuclear energy. Now our depen-



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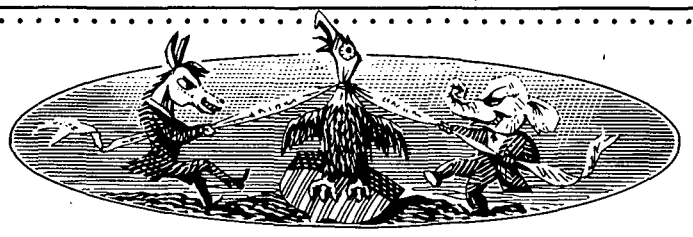
dence on oil is down to six percent, with nuclear energy up to 20 percent. Nuclear energy has obviously reduced our dependence on foreign oil.

Yet the pols have let anti-nuke protestors kill off the nuclear industry and our reliance on foreign oil now grows. Oil consumption in the production of electricity has jumped 32 percent from 1987 to 1989. Studies show such trends will soon make the U.S. dependent as never before on foreign oil. Our consumption of foreign oil for all purposes is now at record levels. Fully 50 percent of our oil came from inbound tankers in the first three months of 1990. Approximately 25 percent of this oil came from the shaky nations of the Persian Gulf.

Obviously, our pols had best do all they can to increase the production of safe, homegrown energy. They have cowered before the anti-nuclear lobby's protests that nuclear energy is dangerous stuff, menacing life and leaf; though nuclear energy is not responsible for oil spills, the greenhouse effect, or the air pollution that comes with the burning of fossil fuels. As for radiation, its dangers are not all that clear, but we do know that the granite in Grand Central Station emits more radiation than a nuclear-fired power plant. Radiation is a natural phenomenon. It seeps from the ski slopes in Aspen, Colorado, and from sidewalks in downtown America. Coal and oil kill and maim people every year, but the anti-nuke crowd has never tried to kill off these industries.

The alarms against nuclear energy are for the most part unfounded. In light of the fact that modern society needs energy, the politicians' dithering has been irresponsible and cowardly. The environmentalists who frighten them into regulating the life out of nuclear energy are the kind of frauds Teddy Roosevelt had in mind when he spoke of "Nature Fakers." These are the people who almost killed off the Seabrook nuclear power plant, raising its cost from $1 billion for two reactors to $6 billion for one, prompting the first bankruptcy of a major utility in fifty years, and causing power shortages in New England and higher energy bills. Thus, as our brave soldiers face Generalissimo Hussein, let us congratulate the brave souls at Seabrook who faced the Nature Fakers and won. □

# CAPITOL IDEAS



## CIVIL RIGHTS AND WRONGS

by Tom Bethell

Following Saddam Hussein's seizure of Kuwait, Washington is in the grip of something close to war fever. With Congress away on vacation, most of the Cabinet likewise, with the Secretary of State in Wyoming and the Vice President in Arizona, a naval blockade of Iraq has been mounted, over 40,000 reservists called up, and tremendous military forces massed in Saudi Arabia. There has been scarcely a word of dissent from the normally adversarial press—something I never thought I would see in Washington. The *Washington Post*'s Colman McCarthy, who teaches peace studies at a nearby university, has been strangely mute. The U.N. is being relegitimized. The feeling seems to be: now that we no longer have to worry about the Soviets, the U.S. can impose its will anywhere in the world. I find the situation disconcerting, because the consequences of such far-reaching and scarcely debated actions are incalculable.

The President has "vowed" not to be intimidated by the taking of U.S. hostages; some in Washington are obviously seeking a pretext for the U.S. to strike the first blow against Iraq. It would indeed be nice if Saddam Hussein could be surgically removed; nicer still if he could be replaced by a pro-Western constitutionalist with democratic leanings, perhaps even favoring church-state separation. Liberals who cheered the downfall of the Shah, only to encounter the Ayatollah Khomeini, should recognize how unlikely this is. Saddam Hussein may be bad, but that does not mean he is anomalous in the Middle East. Arab culture seems to encourage ruthlessness in its rulers as a matter of course.

I confess to complete uncertainty as to how the situation will look a month from now. So I shall defer consideration of the crisis (for once the word is appropriate) until the next issue. For once, also, I find myself in agreement with a *New Yorker* "Talk of the Town" piece: "The still, small voice suggests that we stop and think. One of the inherent beauties of a democracy is the slowness to make war—the people are reluctant to suffer, to see their sons die, and their reluctance holds a government back—but last week the wheels raced forward, and, instead of questioning, the columnists cheered."

Meanwhile, President Bush has been bouncing about on his speedboat and holding almost daily press conferences. One of the things he has been saying is that he would very much like to sign a new civil rights bill; one day he said he "desperately" wanted to sign a new civil rights bill. The House and Senate have obliged by presenting him with a new civil rights bill—so called. It was approved by 64 percent of the House and by 65 percent of the Senate. It is without doubt one of the worst pieces of legislation ever to arrive at the Oval Office. It "desperately" needs the President's veto. The problem is, it is labeled a civil rights bill. And it is supported by Mr. Benjamin Hooks of the NAACP. Therefore, the President worries that he will be called "anti-civil rights" if he does veto it.

Liberals should not be allowed to monopolize political vocabulary. Mr. Bush should long ago have launched a rhetorical strike on this legislation by pointing out that it has nothing whatsoever to do with civil rights; that it would in fact undermine the civil rights of all Americans. Let us step back for a moment and consider: What are "rights"?

Civil rights are limitations of government power. They specify things that government is not authorized to do—to any citizen. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, list a number of things that the federal government does not have the power to do. For example, the First Amendment says that Congress "shall make no law" prohibiting the freedom of the press. First Amendment rights are therefore something that *all* Americans have—not just journalists. We all have the same rights (obviously there are circumstances in which this may not be true of minors, felons, and the insane), and these rights derive their legitimacy not from the generosity of the framers but, ultimately, from human nature.

Some constitutional scholars (indeed some of the framers of the U.S. Constitution) have maintained that it was unwise to attach a list of things government is prohibited from doing to a document that spells out exactly what that government is authorized to do. In a sense, such a list is redundant, tending in the long run to create the presumption (the Tenth Amendment notwithstanding) that the government is authorized to do anything that it is not specifically prohibited from doing.

The recent bills passed by the House and Senate show just how far we have fallen from the old and true understanding of the meaning of "rights." By way of illustration, here is a quotation from a recent *New York Times* editorial (August 6) urging "no steps back" on civil rights: "Civil rights usually are minority rights. Minorities and women ordinarily must prevail upon white males, whose rights are pretty secure, to share some of their power."

Civil rights are here drastically redefined to mean a redistribution of power, away from some who supposedly have too much of it, in favor of others who have been deprived of their fair share. This redistribution in turn presupposes a redistributor, itself armed with augmented powers of coercion. So the meaning of rights is not merely changed but actually reversed. Formerly it entailed a limitation of government power; now an expansion of government power. And as the power wielded by government over all citizens increases, so the civil rights of all citizens must concomitantly decline. →

*Tom Bethell is* The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*



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In the case of the pending legislation, a most important civil right enjoyed by all Americans is directly attacked: the presumption of innocence. Notice first that this presumption is a true civil right: it is enjoyed by all. And it specifies a limitation of government power: government cannot presume the guilt of citizens without due process of law. The new so-called civil rights bill would change this.

How did this deplorable state of affairs come about? It began with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VII of which declared it unlawful for an employer "to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." This legislation was well intentioned, and the legislative history of the Civil Rights Act made it abundantly clear that employers could screen job applicants with tests. Nothing in the act, according to a subsection of the text, could be interpreted to require "preferential treatment to any individual or to any group because of the race, color, religion, sex or national origin of such individual or group, on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons of any race [etc.] employed by any employer . . . in comparison with the total number or percentage of persons of such race [etc.] in any community, state, section, or other area, or in the available work force in any community."

In short, employers could hire whomever they wanted, *provided* they didn't discriminate on the basis of the stated criteria. Not only could they hire on the basis of merit, they were encouraged to do just that. An enforcement provision of Title VII noted that if the employer "has intentionally engaged in or is intentionally engaging in an unlawful employment practice," then and only then may the courts "order such affirmative action as may be appropriate." Sen. Hubert Humphrey noted on the Senate floor that "the express requirement of intent is designed to make it wholly clear that inadvertent or accidental discrimination will not violate the title or result in the entry of court orders."

Despite the plain wording of the act, and an ample legislative history, the Supreme Court in the 1971 case *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.* changed the meaning of "discrimination," declaring on its own authority that "the Act proscribes not only overt discrimination but also practices that are fair in form, but discriminatory in operation. . . . Congress directed the thrust of the Act to the *consequences* of employment practices, not simply the motivation." As Professor Michael Gold subsequently pointed out, "the Court cited not a line in a committee report, not a colloquy on the floor of either house of Congress, not the testimony of a witness before a committee, not even the report of a journalist in a newspaper," in defense of its assertion. No such justification in fact existed.

This was judicial activism at its worst, the Supreme Court at its nadir. The *Griggs* decision was written by Chief Justice Warren Burger, incidentally. For some reason, Justice Brennan took no part in the case, but all the other justices—Black, Douglas, Harlan, Stewart, White, Marshall, and Blackmun—joined Burger.

After Justice Kennedy joined the Supreme Court in 1988, however, a bare majority existed to overturn some of the Court's worst affirmative action rulings. In a 1989 case, the new Court, by a 5-4 margin, made it more difficult to claim that an employment practice was discriminatory just because it had a "disparate impact" on the labor pool. In effect, the burden of proof of discrimination was shifted


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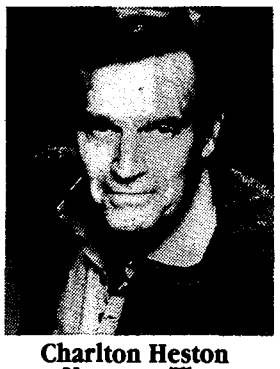

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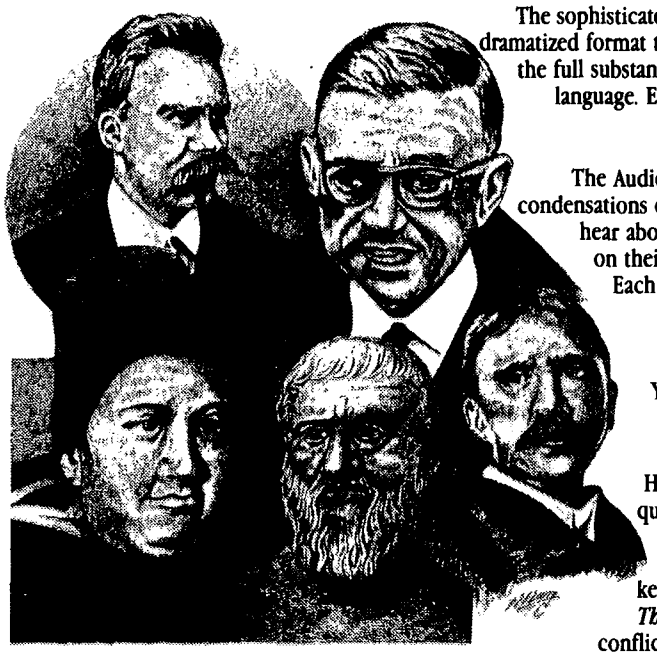

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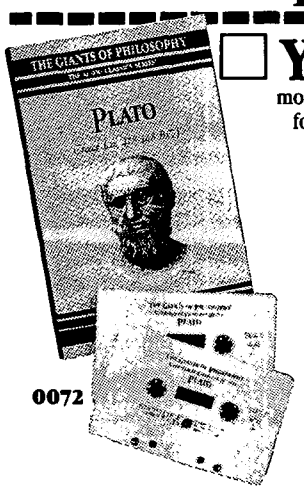


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from companies to complainers. Well, as you can imagine, the civil rights lawyers and their dutiful agents in Congress didn't take well to that. So they swung into action with this new abomination, slapped the "civil rights" label on it and watched for predictable Republican trembling. Under the new legislation, an "unlawful employment practice is established" when a "complaining party demonstrates that an employment practice results in a disparate impact on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, and the [employer] fails to demonstrate that such practice is required by business necessity."

In other words, the presumption of innocence is lost. All the complaining party has to do is show that "disparate impact" *somehow* results from some (unspecified) "employment practice," and lucrative lawsuits can be pressed. About the only way that a company can guard against such a costly outcome is to hire people in the approved racial and ethnic proportions in the first place. Hence, a civil rights law originally intended to promote merit hiring will certainly end up promoting hiring by quota. It is indeed a quota bill, as charged. As the long-time civil rights lawyer Joseph Rauh said on Fox TV in July: "If you enforce civil rights [with the new law] there may be some people who would use that, use a quota as a basis of avoiding it. But so what?"

So it would be bad for the country, dummy, if companies feel it prudent to hire people on the basis of race rather than merit.

The *New York Times* has editorially denied that the bill would promote quotas, claiming that no such "evidence" has been offered. Of course, no company will admit that it has been using *surreptitious* quotas since the 1971 Supreme Court ruling, because such quotas are illegal. Covering this issue for the *New York Times*, incidentally, has been an advocacy journalist named Linda Greenhouse. She showed her ignorance of the subject when she wrote (July 21): "In enacting Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the principal modern Federal law against job discrimination, Congress did not spell out what difference, if any, it saw between purposeful and unintentional discrimination. It fell to the Supreme Court to give life and force to the statute's spare language." Not true. The statute did spell out the difference, precisely with the word "intentional."

There are serious racial problems in the U.S. today, and affirmative action is probably making them worse, doing little more than serving the interests of a black elite specially protected by the state. Quota hiring will not alleviate the problems of our inner cities. As William Laffer pointed out in an analysis of the proposed legislation for the Heritage Foundation, the new legislation "would benefit middle- and upper-class minority individuals who have the education and skills to benefit from de facto quota hiring. Low-income minority workers tend to be found in those jobs in which they are, if anything, overrepresented."

When the bill passed the Senate in July, Sen. Ted Kennedy went out of his way to praise its "principal architects, among them Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, responsible for "most, if not all, of the provisions that were drafted and incorporated in the legislation today," and Vermont Sen. James Jeffords, a "key cosponsor, a Republican sponsor," who "was there every step of the way and mastered the subject in extraordinary detail." Republican Senators John Danforth and Arlen Specter were also profusely thanked by Kennedy. The legislation should be vetoed, with an accompanying message pointing out that the new law would restrict the civil rights of *all* Americans. If the President can stand up militarily to Saddam Hussein, he can stand up rhetorically to Benjamin Hooks. □


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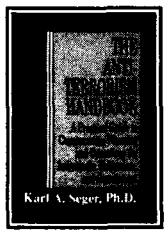


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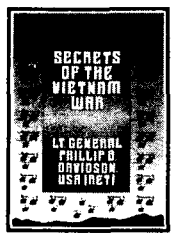


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Fred Barnes

# THE BIG SLEEP: POLITICS 1990

Not even taxes, Iraq, the S&L bailout, or abortion are exciting voters this year.

Bill Bradley, the premier California political analyst (not the New Jersey senator), toured the political community in Washington last July and found that the inside-the-Beltway crowd had already figured out the 1990 and even the 1992 elections. "It's basically three ideas wrapped into a neat little package. There is a new wave of populism sweeping America, the mushrooming savings and loan crisis is a winning issue for the Democrats, and New York Governor Mario Cuomo—and his supposedly likely 1992 presidential campaign—is the political beneficiary." The result: Democrats make substantial gains in congressional races this year and have a solid shot at the presidency in 1992.

Bradley, publisher of the political newsletter *New West Notes*, wasn't buying. He dismissed the "new wave" as the latest fad spawned by "the hope-springs-eternal, bring-on-that-old-time-religion views of Washington's Democratic establishment and the start-a-wave/catch-a-wave thinking of many journalists." Why it takes a guy from Sacramento to explain Washington's latest spell of dizziness, I don't know. But Bradley's right, Washington's wrong. If Democrats pick up a few House seats this year and seriously challenge President Bush in 1992—both are possible—it won't be for any of the reasons now popular in Washington.

For a decade now, Democrats have been discovering new issues and trends guaranteed to restore them to full power. First there was the recession, but that ended in 1982. Then came "fairness," followed by the debacle in Lebanon, the gender gap, Ronald Reagan's detached presidency, Bitburg, Iran-contra, the gender gap again, the simple fact that George Bush would never, ever be taken seriously as a presidential candidate, abortion, and now a burst of populism. The press hyped each new development (I played along with a few myself). But nothing clicked, least of all the populist, tax-the-rich scenario laid out by Kevin Phillips in *The Politics of Rich and Poor.*

Republicans have their own dream issues, ones that will give them control of Congress and thus total power in Washington. The latest is anti-Washington, anti-incumbent fever. If it's sweeping the nation in 1990, there was little evidence in the primaries. Only one incumbent in Congress lost, Representative Buz Lukens (R-Ohio), and he'd been convicted of having sex with a teenage girl. Charles Cook, an expert on congressional elections, says the accumulation of scandals in Congress may chop one to three percent off the vote incumbents receive this year. That won't put many of them out of work. In 1988, only eight House members won with 52 percent of the vote or less.

My guess is that the 1990 election will be one of the most uneventful of the century. Democrats ought to pick up five to ten seats in the House and a few governorships. That's perfectly natural for the party that doesn't hold the White House. Republicans might gain a seat or two in the Senate. A full-blown recession would change everything, but not that much. There are sharp limits on how well Democrats can do. Michael Barone of *U.S. News and World Report*, who is also a former Democratic pollster, says "the historical rule that recessions help Democrats probably doesn't apply here." Voters don't believe Democratic policies will crank up the economy, Barone insists, and they know the chief villain in a recession this year is Saddam Hussein, not President Bush.

Barone is correct on both counts, but there's a larger reason why a recession won't obliterate Republicans. Few races are competitive, due to incumbent power and gerrymandering. In the House, there are at most forty seats, half Republican, half Democrat, that are vulnerable. Should a recession strike hard and fast, Democrats should hold their own and win most of the Republican seats. Net gain: fifteen to twenty. Not bad, but not a devastating rejection of the GOP either. The chief impact would be to put the kibosh on Republican hopes of pulling within ten or fifteen seats of House control in 1992, then trolling for enough Democratic switchers to form a Republican-conservative Democratic majority.

The 1992 scenario is probably unrealistic anyway. In the past four election cycles, Republicans defeated only nineteen Democratic incumbents, while Democrats kicked out thirty-eight Republicans. In the Senate, Republicans beat three Democrats seeking reelection (Howard Cannon in Nevada, Dee Huddleston in Kentucky, John Melcher in Montana). Democrats whipped thirteen Republican incumbents. This isn't a record that indicates Republicans are on the brink of congressional realignment.

Short of a recession in 1990, there's no big national issue that would galvanize support for the Democrats. The savings and loan mess is a national talking point, not an issue with mass appeal, at least not yet. Nor has populism reached critical mass. Folks in Washington were thunderstruck by the Phillips book, but Democratic candidates responded more calmly. Practically all of them have rejected Phillips's notion that the country is ripe for a populist tax increase that hits the wealthy heavily. "We don't need to raise taxes," said Mayor James Moran of Alexandria, Virginia, the Democratic challenger of GOP Representative Stan Parris. "A trillion is enough to pay for the government." Democrats like Moran have grasped that what most people want is not a tax hike but protection from new taxes. And Bush's jettisoning of his no-new-taxes pledge played right into their hands. Democrats quickly positioned themselves as defenders of the middle class against Republican tax-raisers. Republican challengers for the House and Senate who'd embraced the pledge were faced with a dilemma—whether to go with Bush or stick with no new taxes. They were forced to do some explaining, and their campaigns were thrown off balance.

On taxes, one of the cleverest Democratic candidates is Rosa DeLauro, running for the open House seat in New Haven, Connecticut. She denounced the tax cuts of the 1980s as favoring the rich. She declared she won't support "new taxes on working- and middle-class Americans" or "political games that raise their taxes via the back door." She called for restoring IRAs for the middle class and for "tax impact statements" forcing the federal government "to assess the effects of its actions on tax rates at the local and state level." She vigorously opposed a gasoline tax hike. And she didn't propose a big tax increase. The only tax boost she favored was elimina-

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tion of "the tax loophole that allows the top income earners to pay a lower tax rate than the middle class." I don't think this is the sort of eat-the-rich populism Phillips has in mind. On the other hand, DeLauro is likely to win.

Her approach, by the way, is in line with what the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee advises all Democratic candidates to say. In the DCC's bulletin last May, candidates were urged to characterize Republicans as high taxers. Democrats, in contrast, "are justified in demanding the repeal of the unfair taxes that are breaking the backs of the middle class and the poor."

Compare DeLauro's composed handling of taxes with Republican Representative Lynn Martin's. In her bid to oust Democratic Senator Paul Simon of Illinois, Martin made no new taxes the centerpiece. Then came the Bush switch. Worse, the White House created a crisis atmosphere in which a tax increase was supposed to be necessary for saving the economy. Martin, a smart politician herself, was instantly put on the defensive. In a TV interview in July, she watered down her anti-tax stand. She'd backed a gas tax before and might again, she said. Trouble was, she'd issued a statement weeks earlier opposing all tax hikes, period. How long was that pledge supposed to last? "That pledge, and it is real and it is true, is made for the whole budget discussions that we are . . ." The interviewer pressed for a firm answer. "I would hope you would want me to reexamine and if there were a gas tax, for instance, Illinois'd get $1.65 back for every dollar. You'd say, hey, that's a good idea but that's not what they're talking about [in the budget summit]." So her pledge isn't open-ended? Nope, she admitted. When your position gets that mushy, it's hard to use taxes to go on the offensive. Not surprisingly, Martin trails Simon.

Most Democrats have learned from hard experience that plugging for higher taxes, even while insisting the rich should be hit the hardest, doesn't pay politically. Those who hadn't learned got a vivid lesson this year in New Jersey, where newly elected Governor Jim Florio jacked up taxes by $2.8 billion (the state had a deficit of $500 million). Florio insisted his tax increase was targeted chiefly at the wealthy. But tax hikes rarely hit only the rich. They cut deep into the middle and lower-middle classes for the simple reason that that's where the money is. Under Florio's hike, anyone making more than $35,000 a year pays more in taxes. People at that income level hardly think of themselves as plutocrats. The inevitable happened, and it wasn't a wave of gratitude. A populist tax revolt erupted and Florio's popularity fell through the floor.

The savings and loan issue, while hardly a Watergate-sized scandal, holds more promise for Democrats than pressing for higher taxes. This wouldn't be the case if the Bush Administration had handled it nimbly. In truth, Democrats should get most of the blame for the scandal. They pushed through the hike in the federal guarantee from $40,000 to $100,000 per deposit (not per depositor) in 1980. They allowed S&Ls to invest in risky schemes. They lobbied federal regulators to give failing S&Ls more breathing room. The Reagan and Bush administrations were left to pay the tab. You'd think Bush officials would make a major effort to put the blame on Democrats. They haven't. The only one to have done so is Ed Rollins, the executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee. Democrats ignored him, pointing to Neil Bush, the President's son, as the poster child of the scandal and to rising estimates since Bush became President of what the scandal will cost.

In a speech last June, Democratic national chairman Ron Brown summarized the S&L issue this way: "The crisis was largely created by deliberate cutbacks in the supervision of the S&L industry under Republican economic philosophy under two successive Republican administrations. In a Republican era, this mess has taken place on their watch. Make no mistake about it!" Brown's speech got considerable media attention. A few weeks later, Deputy Treasury Secretary John Robson invited a half-dozen journalists to a briefing on the S&L issue. He appeared to operate under the assumption that Republicans weren't badly losing the issue. Should Republican officials underline Democratic culpability? No, he said, that's an "oft-told tale." In fact, it's an almost never-told tale.

For Republicans, the bad news is that they're losing the S&L issue. The good news is that it's not hurting them much. Democratic strategists believe the issue is useful mainly against Republicans who've had direct involvement with the savings and loan industry, such as Representatives Denny Smith of Oregon and Charles Pashayan of California, the top two DCC targets. "The S&L issue will play in districts where a member has a problem," said Richard Bates, the DCC's executive director. "It's tough to make a case against an incumbent in Florida on the basis of Neil Bush in Colorado." Still, Representative Vin Weber (R-Minn.) is worried that the S&L issue, coupled with the abandonment of tax, social, and foreign policy issues by Bush, will discourage marginal voters from going to the polls. It doesn't take much to keep these folks, who tend to vote Republican, away from the ballot boxes in non-presidential years. Weber himself nearly lost in 1986 because of low turnout.

**I don't think Republicans get anything out of the Persian Gulf showdown, which has broad bipartisan support. It helps Bush, but his new glow won't rub off on GOP candidates.**

Before Bush's deployment of U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia to confront Saddam Hussein, there wasn't the faintest sound of a foreign policy in the campaign. This hurts Republicans. Their anti-Communism was always politically helpful in a way Democrats never understood. "This is because anti-communism was never simply an issue—it was (and is) a basic American value," wrote Norman Ornstein and Mark Schmitt in *Foreign Policy*. That's it exactly. But now the issue is all but gone. I don't think Republicans get anything out of the Persian Gulf showdown, which has broad bipartisan support. It helps Bush, but his new glow won't rub off on GOP candidates. For 1992, the Gulf crisis helps Bush more than he knows. So long as he stands firm against Iraq, he's unlikely to have a conservative challenger for the GOP presidential nomination. Conservatives rally behind interventionism, not isolationism (Patrick Buchanan and Evans & Novak are lonely exceptions). This, in turn, wipes out the Democratic dream scenario for 1992: divided Republicans versus Democrats united behind Cuomo, who announces early and scares off challengers for the nomination. Sorry, Mario. Besides, if Cuomo's alter ego, Florio, doesn't recover from taxitis, Democrats may cool on a Cuomo-style nominee.

Democrats have a cherished issue that isn't cutting as they'd expected in 1990—the "choice" position on abortion. Most voters, male and female, aren't willing to make it the sole determinant of whom they support. Otherwise, pro-life Democratic Governor Bob Casey of Pennsylvania might have had trouble in the primary. He didn't. But the Republican party's hand-picked candidate, pro-choice Barbara Hafer, nearly lost to an underfunded, no-name primary foe opposed to abortion. In congressional races, abortion isn't an overriding issue because Congress isn't where the issue will be decided. (The courts and state legislatures are.) Few Democratic candidates give it top priority. "Are they holding it back as the last-second silver bullet?" asked Charles Cook. "I don't think so. Say you're a pro-choice Democrat. How excited can you be about an issue that, for every five votes you pick up, you lose three? Your temptation would be to look elsewhere for more productive issues."

Candidates are looking where they always look when there's no world-class issue dominating the campaign—to the personal foibles of their opponents. In Minnesota, Democrats are playing up the hundreds of phone calls made by GOP Representative Arlan Stangeland to a woman named Eve Jarvis, who worked for a Washington lobbyist. Most were charged to Stangeland's congressional credit card. Stangeland is married, but not to Jarvis. In the race for the Democratic governor's nomination in Florida, Representative Bill Nelson played up former senator Lawton Chiles's use of a drug called Prozac, a strong anti-depressant. Chiles nicked Nelson for missing House votes, arguing he should return a portion of his congressional salary. In Iowa, Republican Representative Tom Tauke has zinged Senator Tom Harkin for having a home in the Bahamas, but not in Iowa. Harkin might as well come from California, "where he gets most of his [campaign] money," Tauke said. On a larger issue, "Red Ink Harkin" is "the biggest-spending senator ever elected in Iowa history," according to Tauke. That's traditional campaign fare, for sure.

My favorite campaign issue cropped up in Rhode Island, where Republican Representative Claudine Schneider is challenging Democratic Senator Claiborne Pell. At a joint TV news conference in August, Pell was asked to name the last piece of legislation he'd sponsored that directly affected the state. "I couldn't get you a specific answer," said the senator, who is seventy-one and is known in Washington as Stillborn Pell. "My memory is not as good as it should be." Pell asked viewers to help out by sending in examples of what he'd done for Rhode Island recently. Now *that*—and not a populist rant about S&Ls—is my idea of a defining moment in a campaign. This year, at least. □



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Andrew Ferguson

# THE WIZARDRY OF DAVID DUKE

## The making of a "conservative Republican."

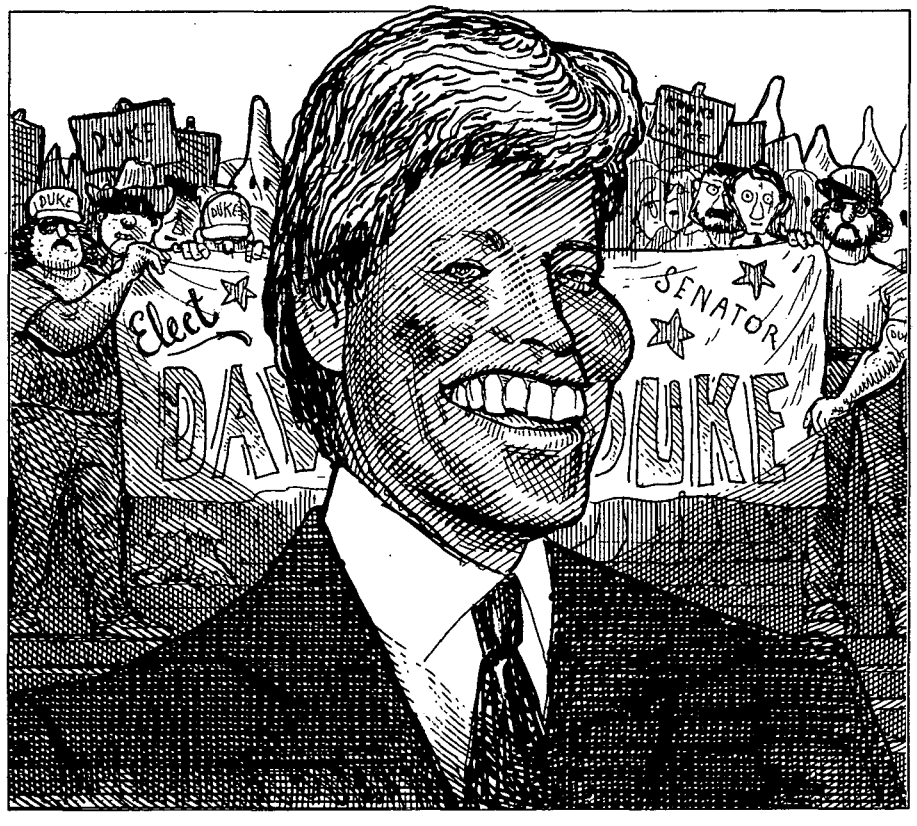
*Metairie, Louisiana*

David Duke does not hesitate to talk about what he invariably calls "my controversial past"—his past as a Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, his neo-Nazi past, his race-baiting ambulance-chaser past. In fact, he usually raises the subject himself, and then the question quickly becomes whether he'll ever shut up. I had no sooner settled onto the couch of his spartan office here than the confession commenced unbeckoned. "Certainly I've made mistakes in my past," he said, "no question about it, I freely admit that. I mean I was too strident, too intolerant as a younger man on the racial issue, no question about it, there are things I regret . . ."

But David Duke is a politician these days, and he has learned the professional pol's trick of turning his mind into a tape deck, sliding in one prerecorded cassette after another until his controversial past glides into his glorious present and the campaign that's scaring hell out of the big boys—the Republican National Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the Republican party of Louisiana, and, preeminently, J. Bennett Johnston, the three-term Democratic senator whose statewide unpopularity has done much to lift Duke to a strong second place in the polls. On October 6, Louisianians cast ballots for their U.S. senator in a non-partisan primary; if, as seems likely, none of the seven candidates receives a majority, the two top finishers will meet in a run-off in November. It seems likely, too, that the candidates will then be Johnston and David Duke.

Many state Republicans are therefore proceeding according to their party's single deeply held principle: If you can't beat him, join him. A gaggle of Republican leaders in Louisiana—now putative supporters of the party-endorsed candidate, state senator Ben Bagert—have agreed to endorse Duke the day after the primary. In doing so they hope to forestall the intervention of the national party, whose chairman, Lee Atwater, enlisted George Bush and Ronald Reagan to campaign against Duke when he narrowly won a seat in the Louisiana legislature last year.

But Duke's progress isn't limited to the party organization. He has solemnly renounced his youthful "indiscretions," and declares himself a "good conservative Republican"; polls show him moving beyond his base of blue-collar support into the ranks of the better educated and more affluent. The conservative movement also is beginning to be kind. Duke proudly offers reporters a newspaper column written by Pat Buchanan on the heels of the legislative victory last year. The photocopied clip is from the *New York Post*, but Duke didn't like the headline so he had an assistant typeset one more agreeable to him: "How David Duke Shows GOP the Way." That's not exactly the upshot of Buchanan's column, but it's close enough for politics. "I knew from an early age that the struggle would be long and difficult," Duke once said, back in the days when he still wore a bedsheet. It's getting easier all the time.




Duke first sought elective office in 1975, when, as Grand Wizard of the Louisiana Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, he unsuccessfully challenged a conservative state senator from Baton Rouge. But he has been in politics, generously understood, all his adult life, as a member of the small brotherhood of kooks and consultants, activists and pamphleteers, who, having outfitted themselves with a post office box, a letterhead, and a mailing list, pursue no definable profession save that furnished by their peripheral engagement with public affairs and all the press coverage they can rouse. The showhorse of this breed is the Rev. Jackson, whose phenomenal success Duke often cites, with the slightest touch of envy.

But you need an angle, and from the beginning Duke's angle, like Jackson's, has been race. Bookish and withdrawn as a youngster, Duke found companionship at last as a high school student, in the offices of the local White Citizens Council, where the concerned citizens loaded him up with books about "racial science" and the perils of intermingling.[1] Duke calls this the beginning of his "intellectual odyssey," but to an outsider it looks more like a puddle jump. "I came to believe that race was the most important thing to civilization in building a society and a nation," he said later. "I came to feel our race was being overcome by the nonwhite world."

At Louisiana State University he served the cause by handing out pamphlets by the martyred George Lincoln Rockwell. Duke allied himself with the LSU chapter of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Liberation Front before forming the White Student Alliance, the first of a long string of organizations of which he appointed himself commander-in-chief. Around the same time, he was photographed wearing a Nazi uniform during a one-man demonstration against William Kunstler, the radical lawyer (or, in Duke's phrase, "Communist Jew"). "It was a stupid teenage prank," he says now, "and I've paid for it all my life."

The odyssey continued when Duke dropped out of LSU in 1971 to visit his father in Laos, where the elder Duke was stationed as a full colonel. By the strange alchemy of campaign rhetoric

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[1]For an account of Duke's early life, see Michael Zatarain's new biography, *David Duke: Evolution of a Klansman* (Pelican, $19.95). Zatarain calls his biography "unauthorized," but he had Duke's full cooperation in putting it together, and long passages of it fit better into the convivial "as-told-to" genre favored by athletes, movie stars, and—of course—budding pols.



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and for the benefit of Louisiana voters, this brief interlude has been transformed into life-threatening "service of our country in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict." Thence to India, where he saw what happens when the Aryan race goes squishy-soft and submits to "mongrelization"; and on to the "Nazi society" of Israel, where, he now claims, the Mossad tried to poison him with (what else?) a chicken salad sandwich.

The WSA evolved into the National party, which preceded his very own Klan faction, which predated the National Association for the Advancement of White People, which still operates from the basement of his home here. Duke became boss of each and then, easily bored, abandoned each in its turn, making sure to grab the mailing list as he headed out the door. The press, however, seldom had trouble finding him. Beginning in the early '70s, he engineered a series of media events of which the present senatorial campaign is the consummation. The murder of a white marine by black marines brought him to Camp Pendleton. The busing standoff brought him to Boston. With some thick-necked colleagues he established a "Mexican Border Watch" to chase down immigrants, leaving after a few days—presumably once the borders were water-tight. He "lectured" (as his campaign literature grandly puts it) at any college willing to pay $1,200, plus expenses. The local press usually obliged his hunger for attention, with interview shows and a few seconds on the nightly news.

But the coverage more often than not was unkind. With his over-the-ears haircut, artificial-fabric suits, and soft-spoken manner, Duke thought he could modernize the Klan's message, adapt it to younger tastes, make it *hip*—the same doomed optimism, endemic to the '70s, that led the producers of *Godspell* to trick out the Twelve Apostles in baggy pants and fright wigs. Duke failed, he says, because the Klan's "negative media image" was insurmountable. He quit the Klan in 1980. (As late as last year, however, the Klan's phone number and his own were the same.) He devoted himself to his new "civil rights organization," publishing the *NAAWP News*, enrolling in est, and, according to colleagues, indulging in some cosmetic surgery.

When racial tensions heated up in Forsyth County, Georgia, in 1987, the new Duke emerged more telegenic than the old Duke but with the same élan, hogging the cameras and sporting a "Keep Forsyth White" button on his lapel. His reception was so grand that he once again turned to electoral politics, running for President in 1988. To manage his campaign he called on Ralph Forbes, an old pal and a former leader of the American Nazi party, and enlisted his financial backers from Willis Carto's Liberty Lobby, considered by the ADL to be the country's leading anti-Semitic organization. Even so, he ran as a moderate conservative, complaining, as he does today, about busing, welfare freeloaders, and affirmative action.

Like the other media events, Duke's various political campaigns (five in all) have served to keep his name before the public, thus allowing him to beef up the mailing lists and invent different institutional rubrics under which to raise funds. After being arrested for parading without a permit in Forsyth County, he established a "Forsyth County Defense Fund," raised nearly $20,000 through the *NAAWP News*, and promptly pled guilty, with a fine of $55. What happened to the rest of the money no one knows. More recently, Tyler Bridges of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* disclosed that Duke's various campaign organizations had paid more than $120,000 to a company called BC&E—David Duke, prop.—for "mailing list maintenance" and rent on Duke's home in Metairie. Nice work, if you can get it.

The *NAAWP News*, with a mailing list of 25,000, also afforded Duke the opportunity to operate his "bookstore," a curious mail-order enterprise aimed at scholars and idiot savants who specialized in "racial science," Nazi and Klan history, eugenics, and David Duke studies. Duke was careful to carry a disclaimer in his catalogue—"It should be understood that this listing does not mean that this publication endorses or agrees with every book listed"—but the blurbs exhibited his salesmanship at peak form:

**THE GRAND DRAGON**, Kurtz—Perhaps the most revealing book ever published exposing Jewish attitudes toward Aryans. The author reveals the intense hatred and duplicity of Jews. . . . This book is a must for all seekers of truth.

**WHO RUNS THE MEDIA?** Duke—Excellent booklet documenting the Zionist control of America's mass media, how the control was achieved and the ramifications of this alien domination.

**THE HOAX OF THE 20TH CENTURY**, Butz—The most important refutation of the "Holocaust" ever written. The intensely documented book that demolishes the "Holocaust" fraud.

**JEWS MUST LIVE**, Roth—A Jew reveals shady business practices of Jews.

**PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION** —Zionists claim it is a forgery, but it is uncannily accurate since pub. in 1905.

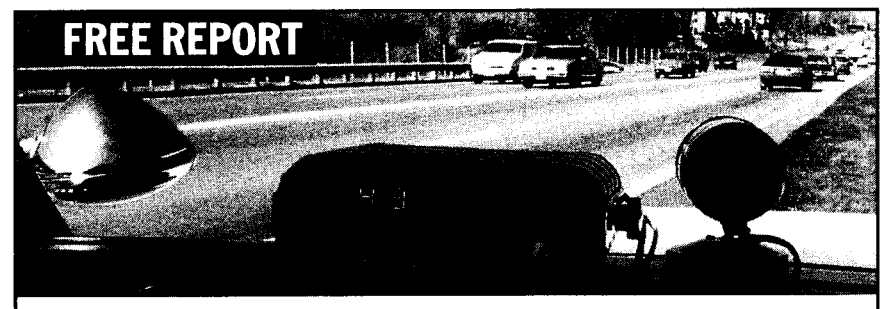
On and on: *Our Nordic Race*, *The Best of Instauration*, the complete set (four volumes!) of Henry Ford's *The International Jew*, *Racial Hybridity* ("Survey of dysgenic results of race mixing"), Klan encomiums, the diaries of Goebbels, *Racial Differences in Mental Growth and Achievement*. For the less bookish, Duke also peddled movies, records, and tapes—everything, it seems, but the sheet music for "Springtime for Hitler." There was *Triumph of the Will* (along with a soundtrack of its "speeches, marching songs, and inspiring orchestral music"), a complete set of George Lincoln Rockwell's recorded discourses, and videos of the conservative Republican himself, "considered by most to be the most articulate spokesman on race and race-related issues in the Western world today," who, moreover, "through the power of his presence and his eloquence, wins the audience over to a basic racial understanding."

**As late as last year, the Klan's phone number and his were the same.**

Duke was selling each of these as late as July of last year—well into his first term as Louisiana legislator—when the book service was exposed in the newspapers. By that time his standing as a "conservative Republican" had become more widely accepted, and there are so few conservative Republicans who sell *The Holy Book of Adolf Hitler* that he looked . . . well, conspicuous. "I stopped selling books," he told me, "because I knew that if there was even a controversial paragraph in a book I sold they would use it against me."

Duke has every reason to be protective of his present position. He attributes his current standing in the polls to his "willingness to say what no other politician will say," and some conservatives are increasingly eager to see in Duke's "issues" a platform the Republican party has abandoned at its peril: against affirmative-action quotas and set-asides; for low taxes; and for workfare in place of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). But his positions here are perfectly unexceptionable for almost any Republican. They are shared, in fact, by his mainstream Republican opponent, Ben Bagert, who wrote Louisiana's landmark "workfare" law last year. Yet Bagert, a forceful speaker with a long background in conservative causes, will almost certainly finish far behind Duke on October 9. Why does Duke prosper and Bagert languish?

Two reasons. The first is the salience Duke gives to welfare and affirmative action as campaign issues. In David Duke's America every social ill is subordinate to—and almost always symptomatic of—the problem of the "rising welfare underclass" and its amazing reproductive capacities. For Duke it matters not at all that less than one per-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cent of Louisiana's budget goes to AFDC, or that the average AFDC mother spends less than twenty-two months on the dole, or that her fertility rate is about the same as the general population's, or that, in the country at large, the underclass constitutes about 1.5 percent of the population. "The rising welfare underclass is the biggest issue facing Americans," he says. "Bar none." It may not make much sense, but in Louisiana, where unemployment is over ten percent and quite a few white folks still can't figure out how the government started siding with the black folks, it makes a nice sound.

Duke seems uncomfortable with issues that he can't trace to the underclass, and when questioned about them he often arrives, foundering, at positions more commonly associated with liberal Democrats. In foreign affairs he is fastidiously isolationist. Immigration he sees as a kind of mucky swamp overtaking, rather than rejuvenating, our economy. "We can bring our troops home from Europe," he told me, "and put them all along the Mexican border." He has proposed strict limits on the amount of foreign investment in the United States, and when I asked him about Louisiana's economic troubles —the state has been in recession for most of the decade—he blamed an uneven distribution of federal aid among the states (Louisiana ranks 47th in return on federal revenue) and emphasized the need for high tariffs "to keep American jobs here." Richard Gephardt couldn't have put it better.

Duke's other distinguishing characteristic as a candidate is, of course, that controversial past. Duke has a 98 percent name recognition in the state—higher than Bennett Johnston's—and the voters know him as the ex-Klansman who sits in the legislature. His opponents have blanketed the state with the infamous Nazi photograph; Duke even uses it himself in TV ads. It gives him a chance to grimace slightly and shake his head more in sorrow than in anger—"a stupid teenage prank"—and besides, this is Louisiana: there's always the chance that out there in the back country some voter may see it on the television and holler, "That's my man!"

"At least my past shows that I've always had the courage of my convictions," he says. "I'm a man who hasn't been afraid to stand up and say what I believe." That's why, as a candidate, Duke brings up his past every chance he gets—and why his opponents' attempts to alarm the voters with it are supererogatory, if not counterproductive. For a relatively small portion of his constituency, his Klan affiliation is a credential—a signal that he's a guy who means business. For the others, who are drawn to him more by his unexceptionable "conservatism" and their own disenchantment with Bennett Johnston, it reveals him to be vulnerable, humble, contrite; always attractive qualities in a politician, because so utterly implausible. In his stump speech he admits he's "made mistakes," and asks anyone in his audience "who's without sin to go ahead and cast that first stone at me." But beyond vague disclaimers of his earlier intolerance and stridency, he's unclear about what it is from his past that he's abandoned. He says nothing today, as a "conservative Republican," that he didn't say as the Grand Wizard when he first ran for public office in 1975. The rest, as they don't say in Louisiana, is silence.

**Duke seems uncomfortable with issues that he can't trace to the underclass, and often arrives at positions more commonly associated with liberal Democrats.**

Which makes Duke a kind of Rorschach blot for his public, liberals and conservatives alike, a blank screen onto which the left projects its perpetual alarm over impending fascism, and the right its frustration and anger at liberal lunacy. Both sides deserve a word of caution: chill out.

I attended a Duke rally one evening in a banquet room of the Holiday Inn in Kenner, a suburb outside New Orleans that sprung up almost overnight during the white flight of the '60s. All day, Duke staffers had prepared me for the excitement to come: "The charisma is just incredible," one lady said. I had also been warned that the folks at the rally would probably be unaccommodating if I asked about the controversial past, and indeed they were.

"Leave it alone," one supporter told me impatiently. "You all concentrate on just one thing he did when he was a kid," his wife chimed in. "Listen to what he's saying now." And what is that? I asked. "This whole welfare thing, getting it under control," she said. "Keeping people from stealing our jobs. But all you think about is we're racists."

The crowd at the Holiday Inn, about three hundred strong, looked reasonably prosperous: the men wore sport shirts and gimme caps, the women wore slacks, with costume jewelry dangling from every ear and wrist. The banquet room was a long, low-slung affair papered in oil cloth and lit by brass-plated chandeliers. The crowd rose and hollered and whistled when Duke walked in, and remained standing for the pledge of allegiance and a rousing version of Elvis's "American Trilogy," rendered to tape-recorded accompaniment by a local chanteuse with blinding blonde hair piled on her head in loops.

I am old enough to remember George Wallace in his prime, and have read a good deal about the other great Southern demagogues—Theodore Bilbo, Cotton Tom Heflin, the Longs—so I braced myself for a strong dose of the old-time religion when Duke took the microphone. Tall and thick-chested, with his famous blow-dried hair, he is bloodlessly handsome; his features could have been chiseled from ice. He most resembles the actor Richard Chamberlain, another showpiece of the cosmetic surgeon's art. But his voice is a high tenor and his manner is uneasy, and when he faces the audience he stands stiff-legged, his shoulders slumped, one arm frozen to his side, the other bent like a wooden doll's. His stump speech, refined over these fifteen years, includes all the necessary whoop-whoop, with cannon fire for the media and the liberals and the Washington politicians and rose petals for the purity and comfort and assurance of an earlier America; but he has the baby-boomer's debility of punctuating his sentences with "I mean" and "you know" and the stand-up comic's technique of ending them with "ladies and gentlemen." When he reaches a sure-fire applause line he dips his head and wraps his mouth around the microphone, overloading the p.a. and rendering himself incomprehensible. The brimstone of the message and the banality of the delivery made for a disorienting combination, like listening to Pat Sajak recite "Horatius at the Bridge."

Is this what demagoguery has come to? It was a good ten minutes before he drew sustained applause from his partisan audience. I had earlier spent several hours with Duke, and his material was much the same in public as in private—the cassette tapes unwound without a break. There was no mention of racial science, no recounts of the six million, but long recitations on the debasement of America by affirmative action; the turncoat tenure of Bennett Johnston; the government's demotion of productive working people to second class citizenship; the profligacy of foreign aid; the drugs brought in by illegal immigrants—each degradation, each insult administered to hard-working Americans by a world gone wacky, each led back, as in a maze, to the rising welfare underclass.

Such great material! The crowd was his, begging for it . . . but like the high-school stud on his first date, he wasn't quite sure what to do. Consider, he said, one welfare mother he'd heard about. Pregnant again, she already had four teenage daughters, each of whom was also pregnant. "And you know what, ladies and gentlemen?" he said flatly. "They were all pregnant by the same man. They get a—you know—bigger check this way. So like Johnny—the father—he can have more money for his, you know, Friday night card game, ladies and gentlemen. I mean . . ." and his voice trailed off to tepid applause.

I tremble to think what Bilbo or Cotton Tom could have done with such a story. Instead, Duke galumphed along, and closed his forty minutes with a mincing "I love you all very much." This was the candidate in full throttle; you could sense it; and his rally had all the charge of a weekend real-estate sales seminar, dozens of which had probably been held in that very room. Duke has the poll numbers, but not the passion. The rhetorical heights achieved by those earlier demagogues are beyond him. Always a small-time operator, David Duke is even yet a man too small for the forces he would exploit.

Left-wing alarmists and right-wing populists disagree with this assessment, of course. It's likely that Duke will emerge from the October primary as Bennett Johnston's sole challenger in the general election, the standard-bearer of the Republican party of Louisiana. It's possible, even, that Mr. Duke will go to Washington. But does this buffoon's lunge for legitimacy mean, as he himself says, that "the long sleeping tiger of the American majority is awakening"? Or that, as the *Nation* magazine suggests, "It *can* happen here"?

They wish. □



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Michael Ledeen

# THE SECOND DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Cold War or no Cold War, the worldwide movement toward democracy will be reversed if the United States does not continue to lead it.

We have entered the Age of the Second Democratic Revolution. Just as the last quarter of the eighteenth century saw democracy sweep across Western Europe, laying waste to monarchies, duchies, and principalities, so today anti-democratic regimes are falling in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Yet, just as the triumphs of the first democratic revolution were fragile, so the wonderful democratic achievements of the recent past require active support if they are to endure. Our record is disappointing; twice this century we have led a successful campaign against the enemies of democracy and bungled the peace. After the First World War, we unleashed Woodrow Wilson on Europe, calling for the moralization of international affairs and supporting the spiteful Versailles Peace Treaty, then abruptly withdrew when the Senate decided not to participate in the League of Nations. This pattern—a brief, moralistic spasm followed by an extended isolationism—became the model for this century, and after the Wilsonian spasm we remained in righteous solitude, unmoved even by the onslaught of Fascism, until the Japanese bombed us into the Second World War.

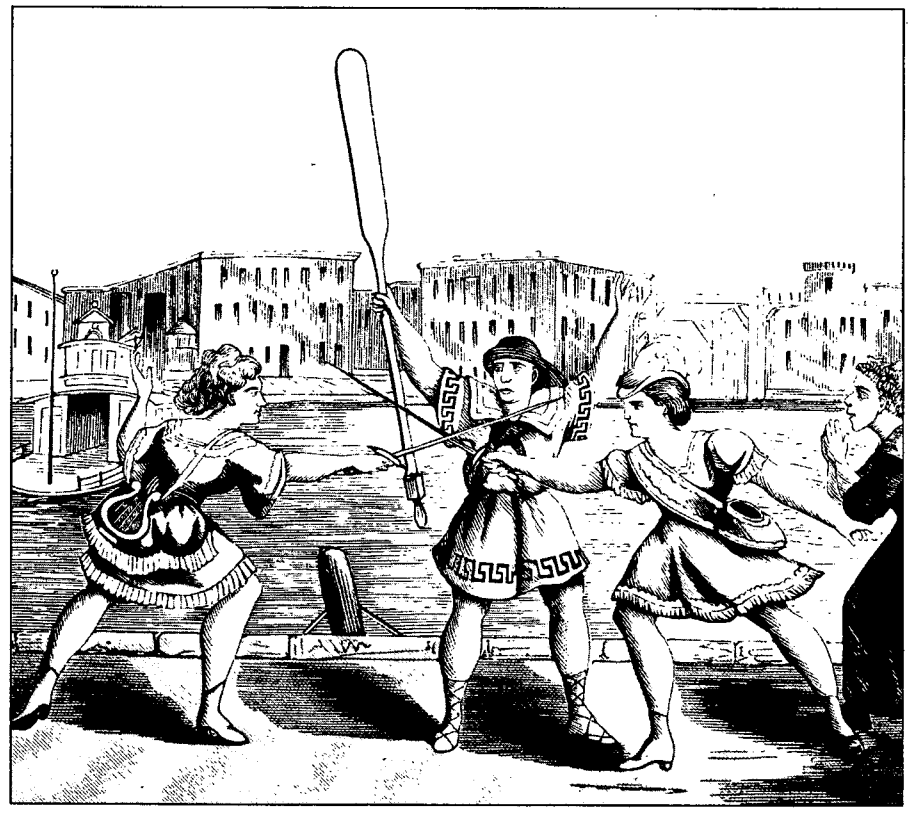
It might have been hoped that we had learned our lesson, and would remain vigorously engaged in (at a minimum) Europe and Asia. But no sooner was the Axis defeated than we speedily brought the boys home. When Stalin attempted to expand his empire into Western Europe and the Persian Gulf, we managed a spasm between 1945 and 1948 (the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan), and once again lapsed into isolationism, encouraging the Soviets and the Chinese to try once more—in Korea.

On the one hand, our behavior encouraged our enemies to believe that we would not respond to hostile actions, making conflict more likely and, because we generally responded late, more violent. On the other, it left our allies unsure that we would defend them. As a Turkish general once put it, "The trouble with having the United States for an ally is that you never know when the Americans are going to turn around and stab themselves in the back."

Our failures derived in part from one of the paradoxes of American political culture: we desire the spread of democracy, but we are reluctant to meddle in the internal affairs of other countries. We rail against the enemies of democracy, but ignore them unless we feel directly threatened. And since we very rarely feel threatened, we are slow to engage, and overeager to return to "normalcy" as soon as the struggles seem to be over.

So it was with the Cold War. While the academic left would have us believe that the United States was driven by a near-pathological anti-Communism, we were typically quite slow to respond to the Communist threat, and showed little appetite for sponsoring the spread of democracy. Insofar as we had a grand strategy, it was based not on anti-Communism but on George Kennan's vision of the need to contain Soviet Russia until it mellowed or collapsed. Even the Marshall Plan was offered to the Soviet Union and its satellites.

From the very beginning, we were always looking for a convenient escape from the Cold War. When the East Germans and Hungarians rose against Soviet oppression, we made it clear that "containment" did not involve helping freedom fighters in the satellite countries. And we were always eager to read signs of moderation in the tea leaves from the Kremlin. Each new Soviet dictator was hailed as a closet liberal, beginning with Stalin himself and culminating in the phantasmagorical portrayal of former KGB chief Yuri Andropov as a Scotch-drinking, jazz-loving aficionado of English-language pulp novels. The CIA seems invariably to have given the Kremlin the benefit of the doubt; the agency's estimates of Soviet military spending—as we now know from the Russians themselves—were shockingly low. From the late sixties on, a succession of administrations and most of the top journalists and producers fought valiantly against the very idea that the Soviet Union supported international terrorism, and until the late seventies we stopped developing new intercontinental ballistic missiles, permitting the Soviets to catch up.



American withdrawal was justified by the theory of "apes on a treadmill," which held that the nuclear arms race would continue as long as the United States held strategic superiority. The unstated premise of this fantasy was that the Soviet Union was somehow entitled to strategic parity, and it lasted until Jimmy Carter discovered that the Soviets were not satisfied with parity; they wanted superiority. In order to avoid a drastic inversion of the strategic balance, Carter's last budget began the surge in American defense spending that carried through Reagan's first term.

Both the American government and scores of American intellectuals went through amazing mental contortions to avoid admitting the truth about Soviet involvement in international terrorism. When PLO spokesmen bragged about the money, weapons, and training they received from the Soviet Union, they were dismissed on the grounds that the PLO was not really a terrorist organization. When a series of high-level Soviet-bloc defectors—from Czechoslovakia's General Jan Sejna to Romania's General Ion Mihai Pacepa—gave firsthand accounts of terrorist training camps run by Soviet military and intelligence officers, their testimony was rejected. And when Claire Sterling marshaled

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the evidence in *The Terror Network*, she was accused of being a tool of William Casey and Alexander Haig, even though her book was written before Reagan was in office. Today the leaders of Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia are beginning to provide us with the details of these operations (and the news media shamelessly pretend to have known it all along), but future historians will marvel at American reluctance to believe the evidence.

American credulity was heavily shaped by the myth of moral equivalence. Embraced by the left and vigorously promulgated by Communist disinformation, this grotesque distortion suggested that there was no fundamental difference between the two superpowers. We both had too many weapons, we both spied on each other and the rest of the world, we both had alcoholics and slums, and we both killed. Terrorism was put on the same moral plane as the struggle against tyranny ("One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter"), and the likes of Paul Kennedy even argued that, of the two "empires" extant in the modern world, ours was the more likely to fail, because we were guilty of "economic overreach." Others, like Richard Barnet and Theodore Von Laue, blamed us for the creation of something called "the national security state."

By the mid-1970s, most of the intellectual elite of the United States were prepared to believe that European Communists were not Communists at all, but liberal reformers. They berated Kissinger for refusing to encourage the participation of the "Eurocommunists" in the governments of Italy and Spain, many even proclaiming that the entry of the Italian Communist party into its national government would threaten the Kremlin by giving an example of "liberal Communism" to Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. They had it backwards; not until Communism had fallen in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia did the Italian Communist party undertake internal reform, and the Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians do not want Communism with a human or any other face.

The purveyors of moral equivalence did their best to obscure the nature of the Cold War, and they are striving mightily today to distort the significance of the defeat of the Soviet Empire. The Cold War was about values, although many Americans stridently denied it and most of our national leaders remain embarrassed to proclaim it.

**The Cold War was about values, although many Americans stridently denied it and most of our national leaders remain embarrassed to proclaim it.**

We should listen to the rest of the world. When Chinese democrats demonstrated in Peking, they built a copy of the Statue of Liberty. When Lithuanians were about to begin their desperate negotiations with the Russians, they dispatched their prime minister to Washington. Walesa and Havel have come to America to proclaim their democratic faith and to thank us for having inspired them. Washington has become the holy city of democracy, and democratic pilgrims arrive from across the world to pay tribute.

Our moves in the 1980s were generally effective, and proved several basic points: in Grenada, that the advance of Communism could be reversed; in Afghanistan, that the Red Army could be beaten; in Angola, that the Cuban mercenaries could not defeat American-supported UNITA fighters. These three body blows to Soviet international objectives, combined with the impact of radio, the surprisingly effective enforcement of high-technology controls, and Reagan's stubborn commitment to the Strategic Defense Initiative, cracked the will of the Soviet leaders. Gorbachev and his aides are today without vision, without solutions to their most elementary problems, and without the mass political base they would need to overhaul the Communist system, assuming they knew what to do.

But if the Second Democratic Revolution owes much to the fall of the Soviet Empire, it is hardly the entire story. Much of the revolution was well under way before the Soviet Empire was manifesting signs of collapse. Tiananmen Square was not a unique event in Asia, for protests and demonstrations in favor of fuller democracy involved Tibet, Taiwan, South Korea, and even Japan, as well as the defeat of Ferdinand Marcos. In all Latin America, the only surviving anti-democratic regimes are in Suriname, Cuba, and Haiti.

Meanwhile, it is surely no accident that many of the peoples of Africa are now demanding a voice in the affairs of their countries, to the peril of men like Kenya's Moi, Zambia's Kaunda, and Zaire's Mobutu. African leaders from Benin to the Congo to Cameroon are democratizing their policies, liberalizing their economies, and discarding the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism. African civil wars are winding down, and South African President De Klerk has begun dismantling apartheid. These encouraging changes stem directly from the bankruptcy of the Kremlin, the collapse of the Soviet economy, and the consequent exodus of tens of thousands of Cuban mercenaries. The same is true of the delightful electoral disgrace of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

Using economic factors to explain—and explain away—the revolt against Communism and tyranny is unconvincing. Was there an economic crisis from South Korea to Brazil, and from Nairobi to Taipei? Was it economic misery that inspired the electors of Corazon Aquino? Hardly.

The Second Democratic Revolution began with the fall of the Franco and Salazar dictatorships in Spain and Portugal in the mid-seventies. The Spaniards, blessed with exceptional leadership from King Juan Carlos and President Adolfo Suarez, executed a smooth, peaceful transition to democracy, while in Portugal the democratic forces had to fight it out in the streets with the Communist forces of Alvaro Cunhal. The Portuguese democrats were able to get active support (thankfully, because their defeat of the Communist forces was a very near thing), and considerable assistance from West European members of the Socialist and Christian Democratic Internationals. By contrast, the lack of American action in Spain was occasionally interpreted as indifference, and Suarez fumed at his inability to get either economic assistance or help in fighting Basque terrorism, but things were so well managed by the Spaniards that there seemed little need for American engagement.

It is hard for Americans to appreciate how fundamentally Ronald Reagan transformed the international image of America. By the end of his first year, he had acquired almost mythic qualities. He was seen as a throwback to an earlier kind of American, a mix between a cowboy and a frontiersman, and these characteristics were transferred to the United States as a whole. We were seen as having recovered the determination, entrepreneurship, and self-confidence that had saved the West in both World Wars and generated the wealth and know-how to rebuild both Europe and Japan. From the firing of the air-traffic controllers to the restrictions on the sale of high-tech products to the East, from the liberation of Grenada to the mid-air capture of the terrorists from the *Achille Lauro* and the bombing of Libya, Reagan showed that the United States was prepared to take action and—more important—win.

Reagan unashamedly espoused the revolution's central themes. He did not consider the Soviet Empire the only evil in the world (only the sole evil *empire*), and the fight to spread democracy was not limited to combatting Communism. Even when most of our attention in Latin America was directed at efforts by Cuba and Nicaragua to subvert Jose Napoleon Duarte's fragile democracy in El Salvador, American officials were informing our neighbors to the south that we were opposed to military dictatorships. The message was often delivered by uniformed officers, whose



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words carried more credibility in certain Latin American circles than those of gringo diplomats. Coups were called off in Bolivia, Peru, and Guatemala, and the Latino generals and colonels obeyed orders from their elected civilian leaders. Democracy proved contagious, until the governments of virtually the entire region had to submit to the popular verdict.

This, then, is the moment we have been fighting for, with our major enemy in a state of confusion and despair, and our own revolutionary values achieving a degree of success never before seen, and only rarely imagined. The front-line combatants in the Second Democratic Revolution take their inspiration from us, and now is the time for us to press our advantage to ensure that this victory will not be frittered away. Alas, a surprising number of voices—some of them highly distinguished—suggest that we should withdraw from the international arena. Irving Kristol has confessed to being unable to generate interest in the struggles for democracy in faraway places like Burma, and he dismisses the Lithuanians' demands for independence with a sympathetic shrug. Patrick Buchanan thinks we have done enough for the Europeans and the Japanese, and wants the boys to come home and tend their own fires.

Like all good conservatives, such people are uncomfortable in the midst of revolutionary turmoil. The rough and tumble of mass movements, the chaos of disintegrating empires and falling tyrants, are unfamiliar and uncongenial; they prefer orderly change and the rule of law and argue that what remains to be done is best done by the inhabitants of the newly freed foreign lands. I believe they are wrong, above all because this is our revolution. We planted the seeds two hundred years ago, and we must participate in the harvest.

Furthermore, the war is not over. The Soviet Union still stands, or wobbles, under heavy challenge from the several republics that wish to break away from the collapsing Kremlin. It is in our interest that the Soviet Union lose effective control over much of its present territory, and that independent, democratic governments be established in the maximum number of cases. We must make it clear to Gorbachev that anything he does to stop this process will cost him future favors. The President's refusal to support the Lithuanians openly was profoundly discouraging to all the peoples and nations struggling for freedom, both within the old Empire and elsewhere, and reinforced the earlier appeasement of the massacre in Tiananmen Square. The cause of human

# GO TO HEGEL

At the end of World War II, when our ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averell Harriman, advised Secretary of State Cordell Hull to try to influence the Soviets on the Polish issue, Hull replied, "I don't want to deal with piddling little issues. We must deal with the main issues." The main issues, in Hull's view, were the voting procedures in the United Nations. Compared to issues of this magnitude, the matter of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe—which triggered the Cold War—was small potatoes, indeed.

While it is easy to laugh at the obtuseness of Cordell Hull, U.S. Middle East policy on the eve of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait suggested that his spirit lives on. Everyone knew that Saddam Hussein is ruthless, ambitious, and daring; everyone knew that he had acquired little from his invasion of Iran beyond a ruined economy and a vast external debt; everyone knew—or should have known—of Iraq's longstanding territorial claims against Kuwait. But the possibility of Iraq's invading Kuwait seems to have occurred to no one.

Not that Secretary of State James Baker is uninterested in the Middle East; in fact, he seems, obsessed with it. But, like his predecessor, Secretary Baker had no time for "piddling little issues" like Iraq's claims against Kuwait. He was after bigger game—the Middle East "peace process"—and he was too preoccupied adjudicating such thorny issues as whether Palestinian Arabs residing in East Jerusalem might participate in the Cairo negotiations if they maintained a second residence in Nablus to focus on less weighty matters.

I suppose one should join scholars like George Kennan, Henry Kissinger, and the late Hans Morgenthau in deploring this "legalistic" tradition in American foreign policy—a tradition which, in any crisis, goes unerringly for the capillary. Yet in this most recent crisis, the absence of a strategic approach could have served our long-term national interests rather well.

Consider what probably would have happened had we assessed the Iraqi threat correctly. We would have offered firm assurances to the Emir of Kuwait of our steadfastness and resolve to save his kingdom. We would have threatened Saddam Hussein with grave consequences should he invade his tiny neighbor. Had Saddam ignored our threats, we would surely have felt that a failure to respond militarily would undermine the credibility of our alliances around the world. Hence, the United States would in all likelihood have gone to war for the sake of Kuwait's territorial integrity.

This, of course, is just as Kuwait would have wanted it. Even after Iraq's armed forces had effectively dispatched his nation, Kuwait's ambassador to the U.S. was openly calling for American military action. That such action could lead to considerable loss in American lives was no concern of his. On the contrary, it no doubt seemed just and proper to this distinguished member of the Al-Sabah dynasty that Americans should pay a blood tax so that his fellow clansmen might continue to levy an oil tax on America and the world.

Why should Americans agree to such a bargain? Editorial writers have invoked the need to stand up to international piracy. But surely the Kuwaitis, who played their part in the "oil-shocks" of 1974 and 1979, who caused massive economic dislocations in the industrial world and tremendous suffering in the Third World—surely the Kuwaitis are no less piratical than the Iraqis. Thus, no issue of principle is involved. The only question is: Should we save the weaker pirate from the stronger pirate?

Those who answer yes make their argument in balance-of-power terms. Iraq seeks hegemony in the Persian Gulf. It is in our interest that it not succeed. Having taken Kuwait, Iraq must be deterred from further conquest. If this entails the threat—and reality—of U.S. military intervention, so be it.

The balance-of-power approach has many able advocates in this country and abroad. Unfortunately, most of them assume that their approach is the *only* way of thinking strategically. It is not. There is another, more fruitful way of approaching the Persian Gulf crisis—the Hegelian way.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel has been much in the news lately. First, former State Department official Francis Fukuyama cited Hegel in defense of his "end of history" thesis. Next, Czech President Vaclav Havel used Hegel's terminology in a speech to Congress that explained why "consciousness" precedes "being" (or is it the other way around?).

If Hegel were, as they say, around today, what would he make of the Persian Gulf? No doubt the first thing that would strike this historically minded philosopher is the anachronistic character of the Gulf regimes. Elsewhere the world is groping, slowly but inexorably, toward democracy, but in the Gulf, tribal clans like the Al-Sabahs and the Saudis rule in feudal splendor.

Another thing he would surely note is the respect and deference accorded these feudal potentates by the rest of mankind. Even the U.S., the most powerful democratic nation in the world, appears to hold these corrupt despots in special awe.

"How has this absurd situation come about?" he would ask. Because the Arabs own the oil, we would tell him.

"But why don't you simply take the oil away from these outrageous pirates?" Because that is contrary to international law, we would respond.

"But even that British *Dinkelspiel*, John Stuart Mill, had the sense to observe that the norms of international morality do not apply between civilized nations and barbarians," Hegel would counter. But Mill was undoubtedly an imperialist and a racist, we would reply. We, on the other hand, are law-abiding members of the international community.

At this point, shaking his head in disbelief, Hegel would notice Saddam Hussein. "Ah, my old friend Napoleon, reincarnated as a Semite!" Hegel would immediately grasp that, just as Napoleon had been designated by History to sweep away the old order in Europe, so is Saddam History's chosen instrument to remake the Persian Gulf. Hegel would recognize the dialectical nature of the historical process: First, Saddam extends his sway over Kuwait, the Gulf Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. Then the U.S. and its allies, unwilling to act against the "conservative" sheikdoms of Araby but horrified at the prospect of the "Hitlerite" Saddam gaining control over their oil supply, finally do what they should have done in 1973—invade the Gulf, topple Saddam, and—as Hegel's most famous disciple put it—"expropriate the expropriators." And so, by a roundabout and totally unexpected route, the West would regain control of its economic destiny, the feudal era would draw to a close in the Gulf, and Hegel's faith in the "cunning of History" would stand vindicated.

All this may be fanciful. But is it any more fanciful for democratic America to commit lives and treasure to defend a handful of wretched Arab regimes—regimes, moreover, which then use their American-guaranteed security to threaten and despoil the West? In the Gulf, as elsewhere, we must define our objectives carefully, and devise the means to attain them. It cannot be our aim to guarantee the Houses of Sabah and Saud in perpetuity. A new age requires new thinking. *—Saul Lewis*



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liberty is universal, and to compromise it in one place damages it everywhere.

Although the Warsaw Pact is dead and it is hard to imagine a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, the Soviet Union continues to produce weapons at very near its traditionally frightening rate. Why? Unless it is assumed that the Soviet marshals are living in dread of a NATO invasion, it must be concluded that someone in the Kremlin has an offensive plan for these weapons. We should not encourage the Soviets to believe in a foreign quick fix to their domestic ills. We need to remain strong, at least until there has actually been a significant cut in arms or arms manufacture, or further disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. Moreover, we need military power to defend the cause of freedom elsewhere. The recent adventures of Saddam Hussein should remove any lingering doubts about the advantages of raw power.

We have an enormous stake in seeing that the new democracies succeed. Otherwise, the blow to the future of democracy—and therefore to our national security—will be monumental. Years hence, we will see a generation of embittered democrats come to power convinced that the United States is not only an unreliable ally but a hypocritical one as well. There is no shortage of democracies under siege: narcoterrorism threatens several Latin American countries; El Salvador and Nicaragua are racked with internal conflict; Pakistani president Ghulam Ishaq Khan used military backing in August to oust democratically elected Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her Pakistani People's party; and disease and war menace much of Africa. If De Klerk's efforts to liberalize South Africa fail, all of sub-Saharan Africa will suffer enormously. We can—must—do our best to support those fighting for our common ideals.

Nor is the struggle over in Central and Eastern Europe. In Czechoslovakia, intelligence officers are on trial for continuing to tap phones and bug the homes and offices of dissident leaders, even after the "Velvet Revolution." There is a great debate in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia about whether vengeance is a wise policy at this juncture. Should former leaders be put on trial? If so, how many of them? Such questions are made more difficult by the fact that democrats in Central and Eastern Europe are often missing crucial elements in their own histories.

**The obligation to involve ourselves in building free societies does not end at the borders of the Soviet Empire.**

In Prague last July, I commented to a top journalist that I had spent time with one of the leading Czech defectors, General Sejna. The journalist reacted as if someone had set off a rocket under his seat, for he had believed the official version, that Sejna had died in the attempt more than twenty years ago.

The American government has pieces of the puzzle that we must share. We will discover that it is a reciprocal process, for they know the true story of the terror network, as well as the story of those of our own citizens who were used—consciously or otherwise—by the governments of the Soviet bloc. The East Europeans have already opposed some actions of the former secret services; we should be providing their citizens with as much information as we can reasonably declassify and publish. Together, we might reliably reconstruct the Cold War years. As we do, we will find the Poles uniquely useful, for the Polish underground has spent much of the past decade assembling and publishing the true history of postwar Poland.

Then there are the massive problems of reconstruction: How to build democracy? How to build a free-market economy? As Irwin Stelzer noted in *Commentary* earlier this year, the notion of a massive aid program for the new democracies makes very little sense, for only after the creation of free political and economic institutions can foreign aid and foreign investment be effectively absorbed. The Poles have done the most so far, making their currency convertible, removing price controls on thousands of items, and preparing to lift wage controls. The Hungarians have done a bit, the Czechs next to nothing, but this is the least of it. The factories and businesses of these countries are overstaffed, underskilled, and atrociously maintained. And there is hardly a businessman in all of Eastern and Central Europe who knows how to quantify his activities: What are his costs, his cash flow, his profit margin, his tax liabilities? These are the questions they must learn to answer if their countries are going to make it.

We can bring such would-be entrepreneurs to the United States as interns, giving them hands-on experience in running similar enterprises (the National Forum Foundation in Washington is running a worthy pilot program). We can bring them to our business schools, or send American businessmen and professors to lecture to them over there (it is amazing how many American businessmen speak Hungarian, Czech, or Polish). In like manner, we can bring politicians, journalists, and others to the United States for practical training in democracy. They can work in, or watch, our legislative and executive branches, intern at our newspapers, compare notes with our journalism professors, and study our national news broadcasts. We should emulate a particularly intelligent form of foreign aid now being given the East Europeans by the Common Market countries, which are paying the salaries of West Europeans now "on loan" to the ministries of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The concept has been copied by the East Germans, who in at least three cases have hired West Germans as mayors of their cities.

These activities sound so simple that one assumes they have already been done, but very little has happened, and those who have tried have been profoundly frustrated. Czech émigrés in Canada, for example, raised money to teach democracy in Czech schools this past spring. The money was sent, the (Czech-speaking) instructors arrived, but the education bureaucrats blocked the initiative. As good Communists they did not want to see heretical doctrines creep into the curriculum, and as good bureaucrats they resisted change.

Such examples show that the damage done by Communism was much more profound than is generally understood. It was not merely the day-to-day oppression and misery; it was a violent separation from the knowledge and the skills of the civilized world. We need to participate in the internal affairs of the new democracies, giving our expertise, investing our money, opening our doors to those who want to study our methods. These things are best done by private organizations, but they are far more likely to succeed if our national leaders encourage and inspire them.

The obligation to involve ourselves in building free societies does not end at the borders of the Soviet Empire, any more than the democratic revolution began or ended there. Insofar as we can advance the democratic cause in Kenya or Zaire, Burma, or Panama, we should do so. Indeed, as many businessmen are discovering, it is very difficult to do business in Eastern Europe, because one must eliminate a great deal of rubbish and debris from the Communist era. Starting from scratch, as one often must in Africa, is in many ways easier than in the old Empire.

It has been argued that, in a period of huge national deficits, the government cannot assume worldwide burdens or support a large foreign-aid program, and should encourage Germany and Japan to assume a considerable amount of that obligation. The argument is half true: the Germans and Japanese should certainly be fully engaged (the Germans are, and the Japanese are doing more every year). But this does not exempt us from our duties. If our national leaders encourage American entrepreneurs to invest in the emerging democracies—offering tax credits and other incentives along the way—and provide some hands-on expertise to the new democracies, then we shall grow alongside them. If Africa and Latin America finally begin to develop, we shall have gained business partners as well as democratic friends.

Not least, our active participation in the Second Democratic Revolution will do wonders for our own people. Few generations have been privileged to live through a time of such excitement and promise, yet we are strangely subdued. Some of this is the fault of the President, who apparently feels that passion is not appropriate for a government such as his. The rest can be attributed to the traditional American disdain for international affairs, entangling alliances, and the rest. We would do well to recall Thomas Paine's words:

> The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.

"By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue," he wrote, "by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils." □



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# TALES FROM TWO CITIES (I)
## PETERSBURG

by Maurice Cranston

Leningrad claims, with some justice, to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world, displaying, like Venice and Amsterdam, its finest buildings along the banks of rivers and canals. It is also one of the most depressing cities in the world because these rivers and canals are deserted. The Soviet regime does not approve of boats, which can be sailed down to the Gulf of Finland and on to freedom. So all you see are police launches and pleasure craft for tourists or, further downstream, the occasional jetfoil for important passengers. As you wander beside the wide Neva, or the Fontanka or Griboyedova canals that wind through the center of the city, you pass hundreds of landing stages where no vessel has tied up for over seventy years; and from pre-revolutionary prints and photographs you can see that there was once more navigation here than in Venice itself.

Italian architects designed so many of the principal monuments and buildings that you might not believe you were in Russia but for the gold-encrusted domes and towers of the Church of the Savior's Blood, or the massive functionalist barracks which serves as the Leningrad Hotel. Venice is said to be crumbling, but Leningrad is in much worse shape. Many of the old noblemen's mansions and grand bourgeois apartment blocks are dismal shells enclosed in rusty scaffolding, from which fragments sometimes drop on passersby. The streets are thunderous with traffic and the air is thick with the vile fumes of low-octane gasoline. Since there are no barges on the waterways to carry heavy freight, trucks in endless convoys carry stone and rubble for a giant dam being built somewhere down the Neva. Many of the better-paid workers and petty party functionaries drive nasty little East European models, battered and unwashed.

At the end of the day traffic stops, because the main bridges close every night. In effect, it is a curfew. On summer nights, when there is hardly any darkness this far north, there is a strange, sad beauty about the silent city, the river so wide that one can see at the same time the splendid palaces of the Hermitage, the noble fortress of Peter and Paul, and the proud Rostral columns of the Strelka, incongruous amidst the bankrupt socialism of Leningrad today.

Those grand Imperial buildings have been preserved and restored, while the houses of private families have been left to rot. Although it is the monuments that tourists come to see, restoration has not been for tourists' sake; the Communist regime has long had imperial dreams of its own. Stalin saw himself increasingly as the successor of Peter the Great and other heroic Emperors, and made Soviet relics of Imperial relics. At the Hermitage, or the Winter Palace or the Peterhof or Tsarskoye Selo, infinite pains are taken to reproduce eighteenth-century moldings and carvings in the palace rooms to the standard of the Emperor's skilled artisans, while in the stores of Leningrad there is hardly a stick of furniture for the ordinary housewife. There is not much food either.

In Leningrad this summer, everyone said that the food shortages were worse than they had been for several years. Outside the *gastronom*, or food shop, you would see a line of people with empty baskets: that was a sign there was something for sale. No line, no food. By way of explanation one hears the word *perestroika*. Gorbachev's policy is blamed for the failure of the economy, and one can see why—people work if they are rewarded or if they are afraid. Under Gorbachev, workers are neither afraid nor yet rewarded with anything worth having, so work slackens, or there are strikes and productivity declines still further.

Crime is becoming widespread. Of the foreign writers with whom I traveled, one was mugged outside the Kirov opera house, another had his watch discreetly removed, two, unwisely using the Soviet airline Aeroflot, lost their baggage; I had shirts and coats stolen from my hotel room. Touts are everywhere, trying to sell pots of caviar or buy foreign currency for rubles by offering tourists four or five times the official rate. Even solid working-class people are eager to accumulate enough dollars or deutschemarks to go to Yugoslavia and buy second- or third-hand cars to drive around Leningrad.

I write of Leningrad, but that may not be its name much longer. At the Writers' Union meetings I attended, every speaker referred to the place as Petersburg, and since then the local council has asked the government to restore the original name—although strictly speaking that should be St. Petersburg, because the city was dedicated to the Apostle, not to the Emperor. Lenin is not loved in the place where he arrived in a sealed train from Switzerland in April 1917 to overthrow the constitutional monarchy of Kerensky; at the Lenin Museum on Khalturina Street, the custodian said: "Only foreigners come here nowadays."

At the Writers' Union, the members were bitterly divided among themselves. The split was not simply between "conservatives" and "radicals": it was between the mediocre writers who would be lost without the patronage of the state and the good writers who welcomed both the opportunities and the risks of free press. As it is, the party hacks envy the success of good authors who can get their work published abroad. The hacks know that if there were a free market at home they would be lucky to be published at all. The Writers' Union itself might go, or, at any rate, cease to be a club where writers with a union card enjoy far better meals than anyone can at home or in restaurants open to the public.

The Soviet Union has so far kept intact the main structures of organized privilege. If you follow the rules you may do quite well: if you try to go your own way, you are lost, even as a foreigner. Jean-Jacques Rousseau being my special subject, I asked permission to pursue some research at the Saltykov-Shchedrin library on some Rousseau manuscripts which landed there as part of the archive that Catherine the Great bought from Diderot in the eighteenth century. I wrote the librarian for permission, took a taxi to the premises, and presented my card to the directorate, but all I heard was "*Ne vkhodit*," which even I could understand meant no. So I turned to the bureaucracy of the Writers' Union, and four hours later I was driven by a chauffeur to a side-door of the Saltykov-Shchedrin and ushered into a vast reading room, where I sat alone in the presence of the world's richest French Enlightenment archives. I noticed that the list of readers had had no names added since Arthur M. Wilson of Dartmouth College had worked there on his biography of Diderot some forty years ago.

I would have expected the Soviets to make more of Diderot, since his opinions were at one stage very like those of Stalin on such subjects as atheism, determinism, imperialism, and even art. Perhaps the Soviets also remember that, after a few weeks' experience of enlightened despotism in the empire of Catherine the Great, Diderot changed his mind altogether and ended his days as a champion of Montesquieu's kind of conservative liberalism.

One writer honored in today's Leningrad is the poet Anna Akhmatova. The small apartment where she lived on the Fontanka canal has been turned into a museum, and foreign tourists are encouraged to visit; there are moving souvenirs of her achievements and sufferings under Stalin, and of the persecution of her upper-class family under Lenin. Freedom of speech has undoubtedly made its debut in Leningrad, and Gorbachev has said he wants it to prevail, both in the press and in broadcasting. But in the absence of economic freedom, the media remain at the mercy of those who control the instruments of publishing—the printing presses, the paper mills, the transmitters, and the studios. Such people, like the party hacks at the Writers' Union, are often sworn enemies of freedom.

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*Maurice Cranston is professor of political science at the London School of Economics.*



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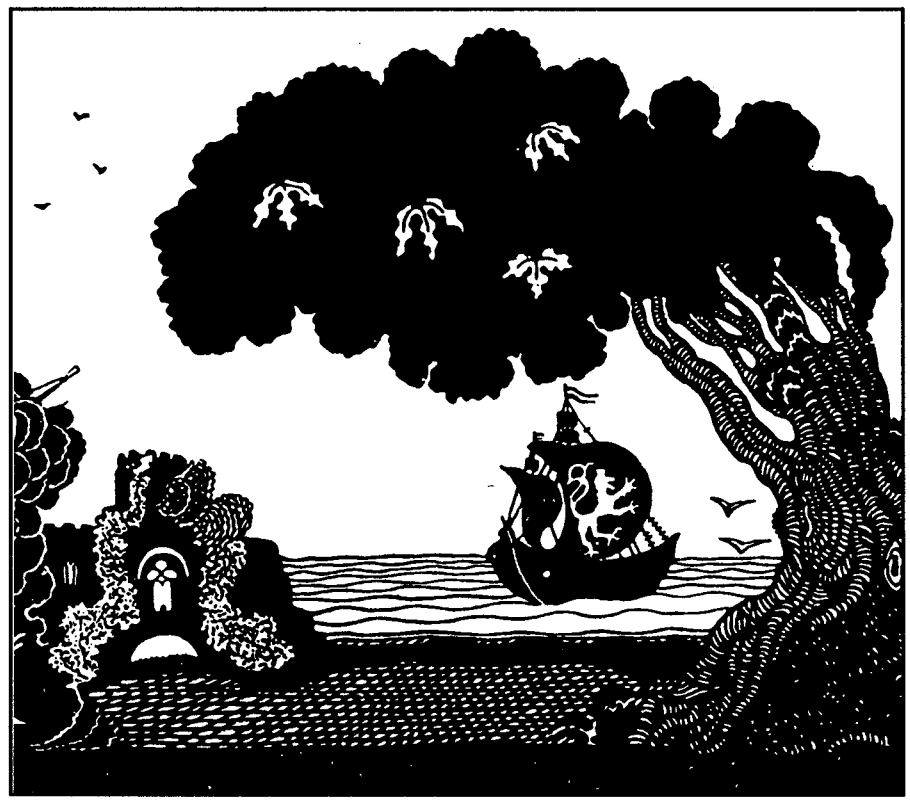
What ordinary people would make of free expression is another question altogether. Soviet television already transmits hour after hour of parliamentary debates, party congresses, and council meetings, so monumentally boring that the public pays no attention to them. There is hardly such a thing as "public opinion" in Russia. Unlike Budapest or Prague or Warsaw, where folk memories of liberty make it easier to visualize democracy being restored, Leningrad has never known anything like democracy. Despotism is so deeply entrenched in its history that you can almost smell it; Lenin and his successors have left people cowed, bewildered, and hungry. If there were a McDonald's in Leningrad as there is in Moscow, there would be the same mile-long line of customers; the same two- or three-hour wait for a hamburger.

Perhaps due to their past as a religious people, the people of Leningrad put up with things that would drive other nations to riot. For example, the ballet is to them what the opera is to the Italians, a form of theater they both know about and care about. At the Kirov they have one of the finest dance companies in the world—but the best seats at the Kirov go to foreigners and state guests. The Leningrad public is offered other companies in theaters where the standards are by no means the same and even competent dancers have to perform to incredibly bad recorded sound. On the Nevski Prospekt, the Fifth Avenue of Leningrad, people look in vain for necessities in the big department stores, while foreigners with hard currency can stock up on luxuries at the tax-free shops. The vast Leningrad Hotel has two sorts of restaurants—those selling bread and cheese for rubles, and those selling caviar and wine for dollars.

"Openness" is a favorite word of Mr. Gorbachev. But how can that disposition be acquired by a people nurtured on suspicion? After my hotel bedroom was burglarized, I reported to a Leningrad police unit that specializes in dealing with tourists, and brought a friend to interpret. The officers were from central casting: one uniformed, smart, handsome, and stern; the other fat, untidy, and jovial—the classic interrogation team of the bully and the false friend. I would not like to have met them if I had been in any real trouble. They did not show much interest in my lost clothes, but zoomed in on my interpreter. She had a Polish accent, they said. Why did she claim to be English? What was she doing in Leningrad, anyway? They suspected that she was some kind of spy, and were reluctant to let her leave with me.

Fear of espionage remains deep-seated. You cannot buy anything as simple as a street map in Russia; such things would betray information to potential enemies. I was told by Kremlinologist Robert Conquest that even the unpublished street maps of Moscow are deliberately distorted. Conquest is highly regarded in the Soviet Union nowadays, since he is almost alone among Western scholars in having published the grim truth about Stalin's crimes.[1] The liberal American "experts" who whitewashed the Lenin-Brezhnev era are held in great and deserved contempt.



Along with some other foreign writers, I signed a petition to Gorbachev to restore Soviet citizenship to exiled intellectuals who had been deprived of their passports for having defected. The petition was granted to several, but would exiles really wish to return? They are certainly much needed as a counterpoise to the dead weight of the party hacks, almost all of whom see Stalinism as a corrupt form of a valid philosophy, Marxism, just as the New Left intellectuals of the West have since the 1960s. Although I did not meet any academics in Leningrad, I heard some of that New Left jargon from students who had been in touch with West Germany. It is ironic that while Chancellor Kohl is thrusting credit onto Mr. Gorbachev in hopes of creating a market economy in the Soviet Union, West German universities continue to spread the doctrine that capitalism is evil.

I was not in the Soviet Union in 1989, but I am told that people still thrilled to words like *perestroika* and *glasnost* and that Gorbachev was the national idol. They were not bored by public debates, and crowds still gathered around TV screens to watch Yeltsin argue with Gorbachev.

Andrei Bitov, the courageous author of one of the few international bestsellers to come out of the Soviet Union in the 1970s, suggested in Leningrad that seventy years of Communism had so distorted the Russian language that it is almost impossible to articulate anything except authoritarian ideas. "Even people who oppose the old regime, express their opposition in an authoritarian idiom."

When rigid censorship held sway, dissidents imagined that it hid a treasure trove of literary and artistic creation. As censorship has been lifted over the past five years, nothing along these lines has emerged. The new generation of writers shows considerable talent for journalism, but not much for literature, and the young artists are as old-fashioned as their elders. What Bitov calls "Stalinist taste" lingers on. Similarly, minds shaped in the Stalinist mold cannot readily entertain the method of systematic doubt that underlies philosophy. They can more easily accommodate the dogmatic structuralism and Marxist humanism imported from West Germany.

In politics the situation is even more serious. Observers in the West have an altogether romantic image of the average Soviet politician. On our television screens we are introduced to such urbane and cultivated figures as Nikolai Ryzhkov, Eduard Shevardnadze, Boris Yeltsin, and, of course, Gorbachev himself. But these people belong to a minuscule elite that has about as much in common with the average Soviet office-holder as a medieval nobleman had in common with the average serf. Gorbachev was trained in the KGB's own college, which has been compared both to a Jesuit seminary and the Ecole Nationale d'Administration in Paris for the sophistication it imparts to its graduates. His closest collaborators come from similarly privileged backgrounds.

Conversely, the various national, regional, and local assemblies are packed with authoritarian dullards, for it is only such men who were ever wanted in the so-called legislative bodies established by the Soviet constitution. If the average Soviet citizen does not know what to think, the average Soviet legislator does not even know *how* to think. According to Leninism, the party thinks for the people, and the leaders think for the party. People have never been asked to reflect, and reflection itself has been considered subversive. It is not simply that the party knows best; the party alone *knows*.

I talked to a factory worker who was an official of her union. She was worried by developments in East Germany, where factories had been overmanned under Communism as extensively as was her factory outside Leningrad. She feared that if her workforce were reduced to an economically efficient number—as has happened in Dresden—about 40 percent of her fellow workers would lose their jobs. Wretched as the situation was now, she argued that at least a man or woman with a job could earn enough to pay the rent and buy enough cigarettes and tea and vodka, if not enough for food and clothing. The unemployed would not even have that. When I suggested to her that the unemployed in East Germany would soon find new jobs in better-managed factories, she said that was because East Germany had a rich big brother in the West to put up unlimited capital. "Who is going to invest in us? Mrs. Thatcher? Mr. Bush?"

When I pointed out that Mr. Kohl was already heading the queue of potential Western investors in the reformed Soviet economy, she retorted: "He's trying to buy off Gorbachev's opposition to the reunification of Germany as cheaply as he can." A cynical remark, perhaps, but not an unintelligent one.

I arrived in Leningrad by train from Moscow, and left by air for Frankfurt. There is no more reassuring sight in any Communist country than a Western jet on the runway when you have a ticket in your pocket and the right to leave. The people who live there, of course, do not have that right. The country they inhabit is still a gigantic prison camp, and Mr. Gorbachev's reforms have a long way to go before they make it anything else. □

[1]An updated edition of Conquest's 1968 classic *The Great Terror* was published this year by Oxford University Press ($24.95).



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# A WAR RAGES ON AMERICA'S COLLEGE CAMPUSES...

## Whose Side Are You On?

THE PROFESSORS

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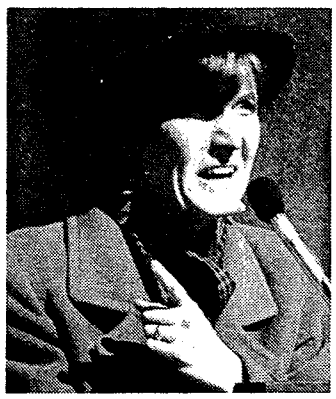
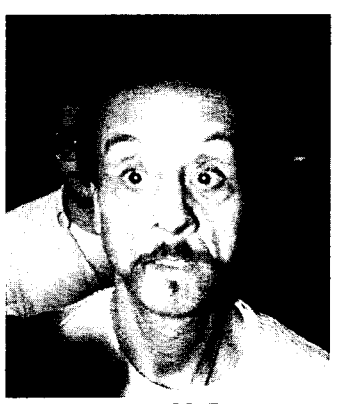
*Boston University*



BARBARA FOLEY
*Northwestern University*

PAULA ROTHENBERG
*William Peterson College*



BILL COLE
*Dartmouth College*

## A QUIZ: WHO SAID WHAT?

**1.** "Let's put class, race and gender in all the classes...that's the nirvana. Race/class/gender is as significant as the bullsh*t you've been taught about Western Civilization."

**2.** "'I don't want to read any more dead, white guys' is the cry heard on many campuses. This cliched denunciation of some of the most important individuals in Western Civilization—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and others—represents the atmosphere of today's American academy. The editors at our paper won't acquiesce to this total abandonment of our culture."

**3.** "He [Adolfo Calero] has no right to speak. He should feel lucky to get out of here alive."

**4.** "You're the scum of the m*th*rf*ck*n' earth. You're racist bigots! You're sexists! You're racists, man! That's all you are! You're biggots! You're racists! That's all you are! You're a bunch of bigots! You're all Goddam-f*ck**n'-*ss-white-boy racists!"

**5.** "Many professors are furious that students at Catholic schools are challenging the prevailing secular dogma and asking for a true Roman Catholic education. As Chesterton put it, there's a growing revolt into orthodoxy—but this time, the students are leading the way."

**6.** "The distorted reaction against imagined racism and sexism on the American campus has ironically made people unsure about what really constitutes discrimination. The political trivialization of racism and sexism has really opaqued the seriousness of them."

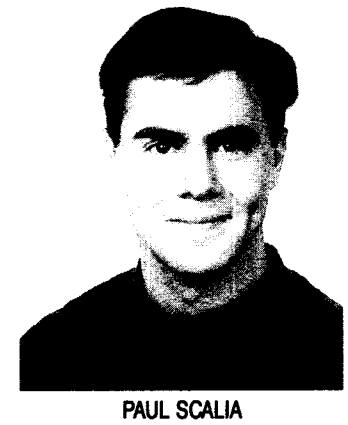
**7.** "Reagan's policies were not vague. He cut the national budget for health, education, welfare, the arts, children, old people, pregnant women, the unemployed, environmental protection—while giving large benefits to the wealthy...With the billions taken from the poor, Reagan proposed to build up the military."

**8.** "At our school the administration and faculty tried to label our Indian symbol as racist. That's typical of liberal faculty and administrators, to lecture others on what should offend them and what shouldn't. Well, we went to the source—chiefs from all of Virginia's nine Indian tribes—and they thought it was a great symbol. Earl Running Dear Bass, Chief of the Nansemonds, said, 'You tell them I want to keep the Indian symbol. I'll stand behind this symbol as long as I draw breath.'"

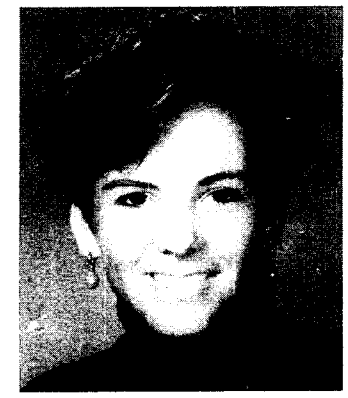
●

**Answers:** 1) Paula Rothenberg 2) Paul Scalia
3) Barbara Foley 4) Bill Cole 5) Molly Baldwin
6) Kevin Pritchett 7) Howard Zinn 8) Jim Batule

THE STUDENTS



PAUL SCALIA
*Holy Cross*



MOLLY BALDWIN
*Boston College*

KEVIN PRITCHETT
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# TALES FROM TWO CITIES (II)

## MOSCOW

### by James P. Pinkerton

If you can't afford a plane ticket to Moscow ($1,100 round trip), rent the movie *Batman.* You'll save about $1,097 and still see a gray city choking on pollution and corruption, where a few heroes fight for truth, justice, and, yes, the American Way. Moscow is a time warp to the *film-noir* forties: before pollution laws, consumer appliances, and Technicolor. It is a city of broad shoulders—and broad faces, and broad bottoms. Bruce Springsteen could write songs about the hard joes in hard jobs, old before their time, who go to work in a silent rage and come home in a drunken stupor to beat their wives. You could call it Gothamgrad. I should know: I saw the movie *and* took the trip.

I had to fly 10,000 miles to realize what an international disaster high-rise public housing has created. In the twenties, Le Corbusier proposed razing Paris to build a "radiant city" of skyscrapers. His millenarian plan to improve people by destroying their neighborhoods was adopted by modernist bureaucrats on a grand scale in the *Soyuz.* From the air, the miles and miles of brutalitarian monoliths arrayed in geometric patterns look pretty, like topiary. Up close they are as intimidating and demoralizing as they are decrepit. I saw enough material for two hours of "60 Minutes": power outages, broken elevators, standing water, piles of rubble, crumbling walls.

In my hotel room I looked around and asked myself, "What's wrong with this picture?" No tub! Not even a shower curtain or a stall—just a spigot. Won't everything get wet? Not to worry: there's a drain in the middle of the floor. The maids "clean" by squeegeeing dirt around, like a kid shuffling his food to convince Mom that he's eaten his Brussels sprouts. I never did see a true mop or sponge, and I mistook my bathroom towels for dishcloths. A Russian woman told me she was most impressed on her trip to America by the cleanness of the carpets. It's easy. All it takes is a vacuum cleaner.

If you are subject to motion sickness, don't look down into the toilet of a Soviet train—the sight of the railroad tracks underneath will undo you. Flushing such a minimalist device in America violates anti-dumping laws. Plumbing in buildings isn't much better. Since the pipe infrastructure can't handle the volume of waste, Soviet sanitary engineers have developed a standby plan: they put a little can next to the potty for—ahem—used toilet paper. This is gross enough—I won't record how I figured this out.

My hotel had a full set of computers at the front desk, but they weren't used. Generally, Soviet ergonomics recalls the glory days of carbon paper, pneumatic tubes, and steno pools. In this bizarro society the clerks see you coming and walk the other way, on the antinomian paradigm that the customer is always wrong. A small example is the restaurant where we breakfasted three mornings in a row. The first morning, the waitress handed us a check. The second, we were told breakfast was complimentary. The third, they said we were not on the list to eat there.

However forewarned one is about the long lines, shopping is a shock and a nightmare. The luxury goods available to ordinary citizens come from . . . Bulgaria. The system fails so completely to transport fresh fruit that it's profitable for farmers to fly 2,000 miles from Central Asia with an armload of cherries to hawk on a Leningrad street. Everyone drinks Pepsi, which is up to Soviet standards—and no higher. The Soviets view carbonation the way Birchers view fluoridation: as a dangerous foreign enemy. I saw items for sale that few Americans have seen since the rationing days of the Second World War—like a gizmo for repairing nylons.

One button I bought pictured Brezhnev, with the caption "King of Stagnation." Another depicted Stalin atop a mountain of skulls and read "King Joseph the Bloody." The best buy, though, is a red-star lapel pin circling a tiny Gerberesque daguerreotype of Lenin as a baby. For 10 kopecks (about a penny), it's a guaranteed conversation-starter back home.

The system has also squandered a rich human inheritance. On Gogolevsky Boulevard, I made a pilgrimage to the Central Chess Club, which is to chess what Ebbets Field was to baseball. Like everything else in Moscow, the building had seen better days: ornate high ceilings rust-colored from water damage, once-thick carpets ground thin by dirt. Yet the club had the glow of old genius and the spark of young prodigy. Anyone wondering why Russians still excel at chess when Soviet power has so successfully stifled most forms of intellectual achievement will find the answer within. Superficially, chess is passive and contemplative, not at all the medium of radicals and daredevils. Yet, under its nerdy surface, chess is dynamic—perpetual perestroika. The stupid, brutal, literal bureaucrats who repressed writers, poets, and musicians never recognized the iconoclasm and intellectual entrepreneurship of chess. The psychic sanctuary of the sixty-four squares sheltered Russian grandmasters, enabling them to dominate world chess even in the darkest years of Stalinism. Perhaps Gary Kasparov, that media-savvy mix of Byron and Einstein, will popularize this silent sport and remind the world of the vast potential of a free *Rus.*

Elaine Kamarck, a fully liberated Democratic activist from New York who would never be confused with a Stepford wife, made the profound observation that the USSR needs a woman's touch. Soviet society clanks along with the grace and sensitivity of a T-34 tank, grinding the feminine aesthetic under its macho tread. Only a minuscule percentage of the population has any decision-making power, and they're almost all men. In fact, the closest analogue to Soviet society in America is the military. I'm all for a strong defense—our troops should patrol the ramparts of freedom, not walk the runways of Seventh Avenue. But imagine a whole country run like the Pentagon: the spontaneity of Ft. Leavenworth, the gastronomic pleasures of C-rations, and the unleashed creativity of Parris Island.

The Soviets are only slowly discovering that men can't think both for themselves and for women. In the West, female purchasing power sets the tone for everyday life: fashion, household goods, interior design, and so on. These "luxuries" are either pitiful or non-existent in the Soviet Union. The total absence of convenience and style in the state economy derives from the lack of a market. Going to Moscow made me see that much of the brightness of Home Sweet Home comes from commercial advertising. Soviet shopkeepers, who don't care if they actually sell anything, settle for monochrome, with an occasional dash of sepia. A typical storefront at a dairy shows a cow; raincoats are signified by a cloud, televisions by bunny ears, etc. This is not a society worried about subliminal seduction.

Meanwhile, Soviet men have created a stern environment, with its own samurai intensity. On a visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Kremlin, I was moved by the words on the plinth: "Your name is unknown but your deeds are immortal." A Soviet battle standard was draped over one edge asymmetrically, as if the soldier had dropped the flag as he fell, and his reverent comrades had bronzed it in place for eternity. Flowers cascaded over the memorial, often left by newlyweds sharing their vows with the spirit of their heroic forefathers.

Other shrines extol the dated proletarianism at the core of the Soviet ideology. The monument to the Soviet space program is shaped like a ski jump pointing into the sun. Friezes show glorious workers, guided by the ghost of Lenin, assaulting the heavens. I saw a couple of women in the scene, but this commemoration exudes testoster-

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*James P. Pinkerton works in Washington, D.C.*



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one. Men strain as they sweat and persevere, their muscles bulging under their overalls. Strange that a monument to advanced scientific undertaking should have the appearance of a Depression-era WPA mural dedicated to coal miners. The country abounds with columns, arches, and temples dedicated to the pre-Information Age articles of Bolshevik faith: Agriculture, Heavy Industry, War, and Revolution.

My final observance of the Soviet creed took me to Lenin's tomb. The guards kept the traffic moving, and the wait was shorter than I had expected—about an hour. I walked in, turned left, down the steps, hung a right, and there he was: Lenin, forever in mortuary amber. The forms of fidelity were omnipresent here, but it was hard to find the faithful. Glasnost permitted the Russian people to roll away the stone in front of Lenin's tomb. They discovered that the savior had not risen, that he was still there, physically intact but very much dead.

In 1937, Leonid Chekayev was arrested by the NKVD for opposing the destruction of a church in his hometown in the Urals and sent to Kolyma, an island of slave labor in the Gulag Archipelago near the Arctic Circle. As a typical *zek* working 12-hour shifts in the gold mines, Leonid wore rags in the 50-below winters and lived on bread. His ration left him short thousands of calories a week. Robert Conquest writes: "All in all, these conditions reflected one main truth. In the minds of its creators and organizers the conscious purpose of Kolyma, which had originally been the production of gold, with death as an unplanned by-product, had become the production, with at least equal priority, of gold and death." Nobody knows how much gold was produced at Kolyma, but an estimated three million people died there. Leonid was one of the lucky five percent who came back.

Leonid's daughter Alexandra recalls her late father saying that World War II, with all its carnage, was not nearly as horrendous for the Soviet people as the Stalinist Terror. Although Conquest, Solzhenitsyn, and many others have established that the death tolls were comparable, we cannot judge barbarism with mere arithmetic. Russian literature provides another gauge. In Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*, Major Dudorov, a veteran of the Great Patriotic War, recalls " . . . attack after attack, mile after mile of electrified barbed wire, mines, mortars, month after month of artillery barrage. They called our company the death squad . . . and yet . . . all that utter hell was nothing, it was bliss compared to the horrors of the concentration camp." Foreign invasion was preferable to what Pasternak/Dudorov called "the inhuman reign of the lie."

Alexandra's family of four shares three rooms, a kitchen and a toilet with a married couple and their infant. No shower or bath: they use a public facility two blocks away. Alexandra wants a new deal for the Russians, starting with changing the name of her city back to Petrograd, or even St. Petersburg.

How do you get the truth in the *Soyuz*? You can't just pick up the newspaper or turn on CNN. The hottest rumor I heard was that Mary Jo Kopechne had been found, dry and alive, in East Germany. I felt the information deprivation immediately, but as time passed the sensation ebbed, like hunger pangs in the starving. The Iranian earthquake that killed 50,000 barely registered, because I didn't see it on TV.

The crisis of the Soviet spirit is not that they don't believe in anything; it's that, suddenly inundated by the Information Age, they'll believe *everything*. The twisted result of the 70-year cognitive blockade is a nation of high IQs and no judgment. The occult, ESP, and UFOs are as true to them as government grain production reports.

In Leningrad, amid the heroic statuary of the Champs de Mars, a guide told me that the site was dedicated to Alexander II, who had defeated Napoleon. Wait a minute . . . *Wasn't it Alexander I?* I asked meekly. She smiled and said nothing. I turned to the KGB agents who were accompanying us in the back of the bus: Surely, if you flip through *War and Peace*. . . . No answer. And there's a non-Christian faith healer on daytime TV. Russians are pathetically ignorant of their Judeo-Christian heritage: at the Hermitage the guide told us that Rembrandt's "Abraham's Sacrifice" depicts God telling Abraham to kill Isaac to demonstrate his belief in Jesus Christ. People don't merely refuse to believe what the Soviet establishment tells them, they assume the opposite is true: Russian Hell's Angels, sporting *The South Will Rise Again* belt buckles, are absolutely convinced that America was victorious in Vietnam. Their "proof" that we won is that *Pravda* said we lost.

If knowledge is power, the Russians are very weak. Locked behind the Iron Curtain, they have become book-smart—with what books they could get. But any culture that writes—and more importantly, reads—thousand-page novels has a lot of raw intelligence. A lot of them have learned English. Why? Maybe so they could grow up to be Gulag administrators for the Kansas

City *oblast* after the final victory of the workers. Or maybe, in the back of their minds, they knew their god would fail, and English would help them get jobs as door-openers for joint-venturing foreign investors.

The party still controls TV news, but that won't do it any good, because Mike Deaver was right: the images flooding in from the wider and wider world shape opinion much more than words. I didn't understand a word of the powerful Soviet documentary I watched about water pollution, but millions of Russians saw the same spewing pipes and dead birds juxtaposed with bureaucratic talking heads. Other media are even freer: *Moscow News* is a lively rag—a cross between the *Village Voice* and *Human Events*—irreverent, and given to *ad hominem* attacks and exposés of Stalinist atrocities. Its 300,000 circulation could triple if it could get the newsprint. *Moscow Monthly* profiles Gorbachev's advisers, with a picture and bio for each.

Old Soviet leaders are having trouble with the new tricks. Most still orate. Their long spiels are usually well organized and well argued, but they haven't figured out that electronic eloquence consists of snappy sound bites. They have no sense of the camera: how to look, where to look, what to do with their hands.

The smarter Soviet pols play by the new rules. They are giving up their chauffeurs, donating money to buy syringes for AIDS-ravaged hospitals, and going on live TV to take phone calls from viewers. Inevitably, *apparatchiks* cultivate the press, get on the "right" side of the issues, and distance themselves from failure. The media become visible hands. Such tactics seem calculated and familiar to Americans, but Soviet citizens are delighted by them. This is the *vox populi*, known today as feedback. The new interaction must surely shape the outlook of the leaders as well as the led. If you walk the walk and talk the talk, eventually you'll begin to think the think.

On my last day, I couldn't look at another green tomato or brown cold cut. I went to McDonald's. As I waited in line amidst happy Soviets, it occurred to me that the old Bolshevik slogan—"Peace, Land, Bread"—was finally being realized. And the capitalists had even thrown in meat! I saw smiles and efficiency behind the counter—was this the New Soviet Man that Lenin dreamed of?

As I munched on my Big Mac, I thought about Phil Sokolof, the Nebraska businessman crusading against fast-food fat. Something, perhaps, for overfed Americans to worry about, but Russians are more afraid of hunger than cholesterol. An old Soviet joke held that "Socialism is the road from capitalism to communism—but we didn't say anything about feeding you on the way!" A modern variant says that "Socialism is the tortuous road from capitalism to capitalism." In Moscow, the last stop on the history-ending Hegel Express is the McDonaldland Station. □



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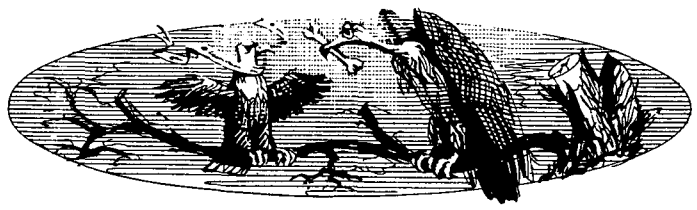
# THE NATION'S PULSE



## CUOMO'S "A" RATING

by Joe Mysak

Get to know the name Stan Lundine. Mr. Lundine is the lieutenant governor of New York right now, and he will be the lieutenant governor when Gov. Mario M. Cuomo wins reelection this fall. But he will be governor some time next year, when Democrats urge Cuomo to take the last lifeboat off the *Titanic* to concentrate on his run for the presidency. Among those who underwrite New York municipal bonds, Mr. Lundine's position will not be enviable, as New York heads into a financial crisis to rival that of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, one that will demand either big cutbacks, big tax increases, or, more likely, both.

There is a certain belief in conservative circles that Cuomo can be beaten, if only we "lay the problem squarely where it belongs," as one conservative New York editor told me. But you can't stop a juggernaut by stepping in front of it. That the presidential Cuomo will be bloodied by the fiscal crisis in New York cannot be denied, but the damage will be minimal if he steps down soon enough to distance himself from New York's inevitable financial catastrophe. His opponents will point to how big-spending and big-borrowing practices hurt New York, its credit ratings in the municipal bond market, and, in the long term, its taxpayers. His critics will have to defend against federal tax increases, the deficit Gargantua, and the savings-and-loan scam. Conservatives should know now: the Municipal Bond Offense will not work, especially when it is run against the national economy.

Consider Michael Dukakis. The Massachusetts Miracle was unraveling even as he ran for office, despite the willingness of rating agencies and just about everyone else in the national press to look the other way. Dukakis's smash-up was not due to lack of competence. Nobody cared about Massachusetts in November. What gave George Bush his 14-point turnaround, and William Safire pegged it right after it happened, was the Democratic convention, a televised spectacular of class hatred and looniness.

To be sure, there is a story here, but it is not the electoral torpedo conservatives hope it is. "Cuomo? He's in training to be President," said one municipal bond investor. "He's run three consecutive deficits."

**When Does It End?**

"I don't understand your ultimate objective," Cuomo sniffed at the rating agencies earlier this year. "What is it that you are telling people with your rating? What is it you're saying? It seems to me, as an investor, what I want to hear is, 'Will they pay the debt or won't they?' " This is black-and-white talk from a politician who appreciates shades of gray. Cuomo was objecting to Standard & Poor's Corporation and Moody's Investors Service cutting New York State's rating to A, third lowest in the nation, just ahead of Massachusetts and Louisiana.

An A rating signifies a strong bond, with more than adequate resources to pay principal and interest on its debt. There is just the hint of danger sometime in the future: the dowager may or may not have to shut down a few rooms in the mansion, perhaps sell a few pieces of the family silver.

Municipal bond salesmen and portfolio managers wonder how long the state will be worth, indeed, if it is *now* worth, that A rating. Did the politicians really fix New York's "structural deficit," as they grappled with a budget fifty days into extra innings last spring?

Most observers think not, and many investment advisers are recommending that their clients stay out of New York paper. A look at the prospectus for the state's $4.1 billion note offering is instructive as to why the state is in such a mess, and why it can look forward to another budget *opera buffa* in 1991:

- On page 13 of the document, the state lists $915 million in "nonrecurring items" that it cannot count on next year, including the refinancing of certain bond issues in order to rewrite their covenants and loot their reserve funds.
- On page 8, the state lists projected and annual general fund receipts for fiscal 1990 and its projection for fiscal 1991. The state notes that "economic forecasts have frequently failed to predict accurately the timing and magnitude of changes in the national and the state economy." But it nonetheless believes tax receipts will rise 6.6 percent, or $1.8 billion, from fiscal 1990 levels. The year before, the state projected that it would collect $28.9 billion in taxes. It brought in $27.3 billion. So much for projections, especially if the economy slows down.
- Finally, we have the state's $4 billion annual "spring borrowing." The state says it will pay this albatross off. But technically, it can continue the practice, which it drags along like Jacob Marley's cash boxes, as long as it likes, if the governor and legislature certify "both the need for additional borrowing and a schedule for reducing it to the [$4.7 billion] cap," according to the prospectus.

One New York banker said to me, "Reliance on one-shots, the spring borrowing, overestimating tax revenues—when does it end?" And the *New York Times*, of all places, editorialized: "Years of sloppy fiscal management in Albany mean a downturn can quickly become a crisis. . . . The state has consistently overestimated revenues. It has cut taxes without restraining spending. It has operated at a deficit and doesn't hesitate to roll debt from one year into the next. It has allowed short-term borrowing to mushroom to an all-time high of nearly $5 billion. And Mr. Cuomo's budgets, with the Legislature's concurrence, have relied too heavily on one-shot revenues and raids on the reserves of authorities and trust funds." The editorial concluded: "Where is the governor?" Shortly afterward, the newspaper quoted Cuomo as saying he was a victim of the "dumb blonde theory"—because he speaks well he must not be able to do anything else, like govern, he said.

When does it end? Pretty soon. Cuomo's challengers, the Republican Pierre Rinfret and the Conservative Herb London, have both mounted the very rare Municipal Bond Offense. It

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will not turn the tide this November. But the longer the red ink washes over the gunwales, the less viable Cuomo may seem as a national candidate.

**The Challengers**

Consider Rinfret, an economist who happens to be a millionaire and colorless—everything the Rockefeller Republicans who still hold power find so lovable in a candidate. Rinfret told the *New York Times* that he didn't believe in cutting the budget, yet he put his finger on precisely what Cuomo has meant for New York in a remarkable six-page open letter. He opens with the fact that New Yorkers pay the highest taxes in the nation: $2,934 per year in state and local rates—an old chestnut. But then he asks: "Can anyone doubt that state finances are out of control? Can anyone doubt that we're mortgaging our future? We are burning the furniture for firewood in Albany, putting unneeded burdens on ourselves and future generations, all to keep up the pretense that the Governor knows how to manage the state's affairs."

Rinfret attacks Cuomo for continually rolling over short-term debt, moving spending off-budget, and postponing the third year of a scheduled tax cut, then details exactly how New York has taken advantage of various "one-shot," nonrecurring revenues since 1985, including refinancing bond issues in order to rewrite restrictive covenants on those issues' reserve funds—and then using those reserve funds. What this might mean to the average New Yorker is anybody's guess. I found it amazing, but, then, I edit a daily newspaper that covers the municipal bond market. Of the 18 million people who live in New York, maybe 10,000 read Rinfret's letter; maybe 3,000 actually cared about it.

Herb London, the Conservative party candidate, also uses the Municipal Bond Offense, calling Cuomo "the debt king of New York," and inveighing against the governor's championing of a $1.9 billion environmental bond issue on the ballot this November. Although the state admits to only $13.2 billion of net tax-supported debt, London quotes figures that say that New York is in debt for $49 billion, a 62 percent increase since 1983. The latest Department of Commerce figures, and they are outdated, show that at the end of fiscal 1987 New York had gross long-term debt outstanding of $40.4 billion, far and away number one among states. California was a distant second with $22.4 billion. This works out to $2,279 per New Yorker—not number one, incidentally, but secure in the top ten.

London is a smart man who will be fun to watch [see Roger Starr's review of London's *The Broken Apple* on p. 46 —*Ed.*]. His platform includes the more visceral, social issues that define him as the candidate of those who cherish traditional values. He is pro-life. He favors the death penalty. He favors a school voucher program. He calls himself "the real Republican candidate" and "the only alternative" to Mario. And he is right. But he is running against the man who cloaks himself in The Family. There is a gap between perception and reality, as *TAS* readers know, but perception is the key. Mario, with the lone exception of abortion, which is not enough to swing the election in New York, leaves his challengers with nothing but the economy to campaign on.

Rinfret has surrendered the high ground with his comments on the budget, leaving London the field. London believes in cutting taxes, extensive privatization, a pay-as-you-go approach to most financing, and taking a meat-axe to the budget. New York's indebtedness is an "outrage," he says, that can only result in a conflagration not seen since New York City's fiscal crisis of 1975.

Everyone knows it. But the state's rating won't be lowered until after the election, and New Yorkers won't be given the tax-increase body slam until next year. The result is that nobody cares right now about how rotten the state's economy is. Which is also why Mario, after a cup of coffee in Albany, will be on the campaign trail next spring.

**Defending the Reign**

The governor is a man of infinite charm, a master of rhetoric. He is a scrapper in a debate. He is not a stiff. Those same experts who think that he can be sunk because he is "thin-skinned" are offering the same ruinous advice as those who think that the man's economic record will sink him: as General Patton said, all real Americans love a fighter. When George Bush lost his temper against Dan Rather, his approval rating went right up.

Cuomo is not entirely humorless, but he has no gibes for his critics, particularly those who note that New York spending has gone up either 80 percent or more than 100 percent during the Cuomo reign. "I think we have done extremely well when it comes to spending, for example, and spending restraint. I don't see any real evidence that the people understand that."

Cuomo also argues that the Rockefeller Republicans who control the state Senate bear a good share of the responsibility for the big increase in spending, and he has a point. But as the *Wall Street Journal* noted, "No amount of explanation can dispel the fact that the modern governmental budget inevitably reflects the political philosophy of the chief executive," which in Cuomo's case is "traditional liberal redistribution."

What does New York spend it on? Well, in fiscal 1987, the state led the way in welfare spending, with $6 billion for "public welfare," ahead of California, which spent $5.3 billion. It spent the most money on hospitals, $2.6 billion. And it spent $4.1 billion on education, second only to California, which spent $6.9 billion. With the election of the governor and the entire legislature coming up in November, "the recent budget process did not resort to spending cuts in a substantial way," as Moody's Investors Service put it when they assigned New York its A rating. Next time, New Yorkers will not be so lucky. And if Cuomo sticks around for the blowup, neither will he. □


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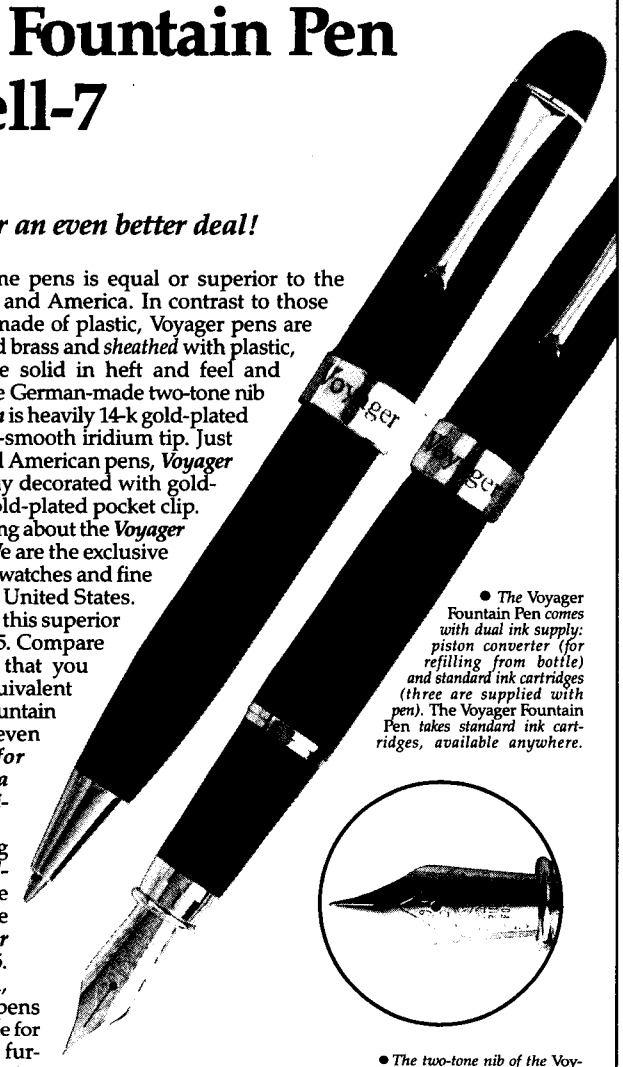

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# GOOD SOLDIERS

by Cathy Young

*Prague*

Nearly a year after the "Velvet Revolution," Prague offers a remarkable mix of lingering Soviet-style socialism and nascent Western-style democracy. Election posters are everywhere (though the ubiquitous smiling likeness of Vaclav Havel begins, after a while, to smack of a new personality cult), and street vendors sell not only folk art but also anti-Communist buttons, including a cute one with a skull and a red hammer and sickle instead of crossbones. Such signs of bourgeois decadence as posters for *Emmanuelle* are also in evidence. Syndicated columnist Don Feder—in Prague like myself for the "Peaceful Road to Democracy" conference organized by Soviet dissidents and American anti-Communists—noted that East bloc societies seemed eager to emulate those features of modern Western societies he could have done without. They are not quite as good yet at emulating such bourgeois frivolities as courteous customer service. Waiters, with few exceptions, are sullen and boorish in a uniquely socialist way—a nuisance mitigated somewhat by the fact that a full dinner at some of Prague's best restaurants costs the equivalent of twelve dollars.

Black-market currency trading is still carried on by cab drivers and hotel porters, but, interestingly, the gap between the black-market rate and the official one is not that great: the latter is 25 crowns to a dollar, the former only about 30. In the USSR, by contrast, the official rate is six to one and the black-market rate can be as high as twenty to one. And, quite unlike Moscow, Prague has no network of establishments catering exclusively to patrons with dollars or deutschemarks, with the exception of a few hotel shops selling ridiculously overpriced jewelry, souvenirs, and liqueurs. Any Czech willing to spend the money can dine at the same restaurant as the American tourist.

This exquisite city often manages to achieve a misleading look of European elegance, particularly on weekends, when local residents in telltale clothes and shoes clear out for the countryside and leave the streets to tourists. Misleading because you almost expect something European when you enter a store. If, on the other hand, you go by Moscow standards, you'll be pleasantly surprised. The display window of an electronics shop features a nice selection of Walkman radios, cassette players, and other things which in the

USSR are traded only on the black market, at mind-boggling prices. In Czechoslovakia, a stereo system sells for just over the average monthly salary. When the Soviets come here, they think they're in consumer paradise, and many wonder what more those damn East Europeans could want.

All the signs in airports, train stations, and many other public places are in Czech and Russian (sometimes also in German and English)—reminders of recent colonial rule. But Russian is *not* of much use in getting around (nor is English, for that matter; German helps). A nineteen-year-old college student who spoke rather good English explained to me that although Russian had been mandatory in school, many kids were blocking it out; often, even those fluent in Russian were pretending not to be.

Meanwhile, Soviet democrats of different stripes gathered at Prague's mammoth steel-and-chrome Palace of Culture July 4–6 to discuss how the Soviet Union could follow the example of Czechoslovakia's gentle revolution. If the major U.S. media had not, with the exception of the *Wall Street Journal*, utterly ignored this event, they would have discovered a universe where Mikhail Gorbachev is neither a hero nor a liberator but an impediment to real liberation. Curiously enough, some Soviet media *did* attend: a group of independent television producers who do a monthly four-hour video magazine for official Soviet TV. They said they had a great deal of leeway in choosing the contents, but they still could not be sure that their interview with veteran dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, one of the stars of the conference, would get on the air, or that their studio would not be penalized by loss of access to the equipment they still have to lease from state-run TV.

The underlying idea of the conference seemed to be that the democratic forces of the Soviet Union should be united in preparation for the downfall of the Communist regime, and be ready to govern. A little overconfident, perhaps, but looking more realistic every day. One goal was to break the ice between groups of people who rarely get to talk to each other: Armenians and Azerbaijanis, for example, as well as traditional dissidents and those willing to work within the half-freedom of glasnost. Former political prisoners were rubbing elbows with former advisers to the Central Committee of the CPSU.

Not that occasional sparks didn't fly. After one of the panels, Georgian independence activist Tengiz Gudava remarked that he was reminded of the prophecy of the lamb lying down with the lion. He went on to badger Georgiy Khatzenkov, currently general director of the new Democratic Russia party and formerly an adviser to the Central Committee, asking him to explain his transition from lion to lamb (or is it vice versa?). Khatzenkov, a sharp-eyed, not unpleasant-looking fortyish fellow, said that he had once been expelled from the University of Moscow for political heresy, and had joined the Central Committee staff in 1968, "when we all had illusions about Gorbachev." He said he wanted to change things but realized his efforts were going nowhere because Gorbachev did not really want genuine democratic change. "I am sorry I was in the *apparat*," concluded Khatzenkov, "but on the other hand I am not, because if it hadn't been for people like myself, Mr. Gudava would not be here at this conference but in a very different place." Josef Zissels, a Jewish activist from the Ukraine, leaned over to me and sighed, "It's very sad when the leadership of a democratic party is made up of ex-Communists. It shows how few true democrats we have in our country."

The ex-*apparatchiks* and the ex-political prisoners were unanimous in their dislike of Gorbachev, their championship of radical free-market reform, and their opposition to any Western economic aid to the present regime. The "Prague Appeal" issued by the conference, and presumably endorsed by all the participants, bluntly called for the immediate dissolution of the Soviet Union. The prevailing view was that the ethnic bloodshed of recent months had been instigated by the Kremlin—a view belied by the antagonism between some of the conference panelists, particularly the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis on the predictable Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Both sides, however, seemed sincerely committed to reconciliation in the face of a common oppressor. The two Azeri delegates, the dark, smooth, pipe-smoking Araz Ali-Zadeh and the silver-haired and dashing Tofik Gasymov, had the particularly tough job of trying to convince everyone that they were not fundamentalist Moslem barbarians. Ali-Zadeh was emphatic about his country's basic secularism—"How can there be a Moslem fundamentalist movement in a republic where the Koran is not available in the vernacular?"—and the democratic, pro-Western orientation of the Popular Front of Azerbaijan. Behind the scenes, some of the Russians, who do not score high on ethnic sensitivity, remained wary.

Major grievances were addressed to the West, for wallowing and propping up the crumbling corrupt regime. World chess champion Gary Kasparov,

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*Cathy Young is a writer living in New Jersey.*



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a leader of the Democratic Russia party, marveled at the shocked reaction of American campus audiences to his coolness toward Gorbachev, and sneered at the universal willingness to fall for the Gorbachev-vs.-the hardliners scenario, which he (and most other participants) saw as a staged good commie-bad commie show.

Among those gathered at the Palace of Culture, the only difference of opinion was between those who believed Gorbachev had been a positive force for change at the start, and those who—like Alexander Podrabinek, the quietly energetic publisher of the newsweekly *Express-Chronicle*, one of the Soviet Union's first and largest independent newspapers—refuse to give him any credit whatsoever, attributing the changes solely to pressure from dissidents. It is only fair to note, however, that the dissident movement had been around for twenty years before Gorbachev, and was at its lowest point when he took power.

The Czechs I spoke to, from college students to middle-aged working men and women, were far less harsh on Gorby. "If it hadn't been for him, we wouldn't have had our democratic revolution"—this was repeated to me time and time again, almost word for word. This gratitude was apparently unswayed by a report, issued a few months ago by a Czech government commission, that the events that led to the revolution—beginning with a brutal police attack on student demonstrators—were skillfully engineered by the Czech secret service *and* the KGB, in a joint plot to replace the country's Brezhnevite regime with a pro-Moscow, "liberal Communist" one. Then things got out of hand and the intended palace coup became a genuine popular revolt. These findings, the subject of a BBC documentary, were deep-sixed by the American news media.

I was left to ponder these great questions after the conference, when the impatient Russians had gone home. With two days left, I decided to take a bus tour of the city, most ineptly organized by the official tourist agency Cedok. Two minutes to departure time, no one at the Cedok office knew where the bus or the guide was. When the guide, a harried, middle-aged woman in an ill-fitting trenchcoat finally showed up, she was collared by the *Washington Times*'s irrepressible Arnold Beichman, who gave her an energetic lecture on how Cedok should conduct its business to thrive in a new, market-oriented environment. She looked bewildered.

The bus took us past the elegant Forum hotel, which, the guide explained, was once reserved solely for Czech and Soviet Communist party bigshots. "Now," she solemnly declared, "it is a hotel for Americans." There were chuckles. In the old section of the city, on the way from the Loreto monastery to the St. Vitus Cathedral, we were led without stopping past a modest gray marble headstone; I lingered to read the Russian inscription commemorating one Comrade Belyakov, a Soviet soldier fallen in the liberation of Prague from the Nazis. The headstone was undefiled, the grave well-tended with geraniums planted on it—what more could the spirit of Comrade Belyakov ask for? Not included in the tour was the Prague monument to Soviet liberators. A statue of a Russian soldier locked in an embrace with a Czech civilian, it has become, I was told, a gathering place and an ironic symbol for the country's budding gay liberation movement, its pedestal plastered with the movement's leaflets.

The cab driver who took me to the airport spoke broken Russian and broken English. He pitied Gorbachev for his problems; as for Czechoslovakia, he confidently predicted that it would become "a normal country" in five or six years. To him, the benefits of the new regime were already obvious. "Now," he told me proudly, "I am my own director." □


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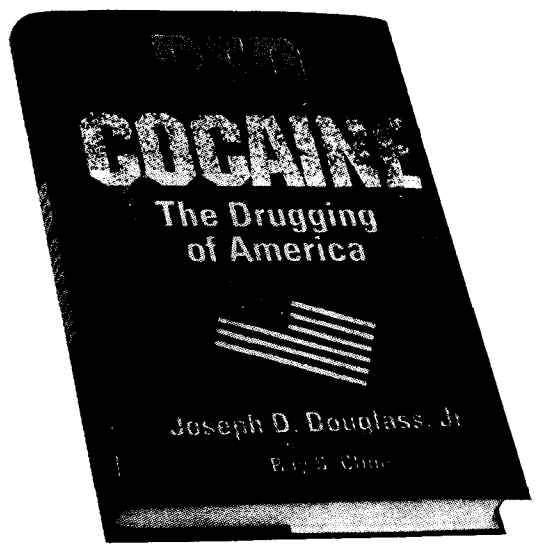


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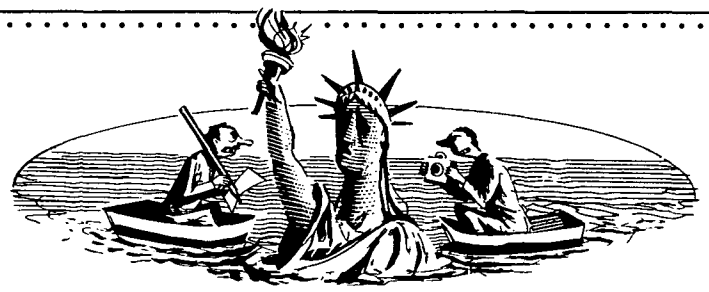


# TAKING LIBERTIES

by Terry Eastland

In late July, Associate Justice William Brennan surprised everyone by retiring after thirty-four years on the Court. How did the media respond? Let's go to the videotape:

*Terry Eastland is resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.*

Bruce Morton of CBS interviewed several of Brennan's former clerks, who had nothing but praise. Morton himself left little doubt that he thought highly of the man. Failing to ask how the Justice went about the crucial task of interpreting the Constitution, Morton ventured that Brennan simply "loved" the nation's charter. Would he have treated a retiring William Rehnquist so uncritically?

ABC's Tim O'Brien plummeted to the occasion, filing a piece that assumed the praiseworthiness of Brennan's judicial legacy and worried about how it might be dismantled. O'Brien ticked off the issues that he said were "certainly to be affected" by the change at the Court—abortion, affirmative action, freedom of speech and press, and "strict separation of church and state." And he interviewed three liberals—Ralph Neas, Floyd Abrams, and Robert Drinan—who served up the appropriate atmospheric comments. Neas called Brennan's departure "a tragedy for all those who care about civil rights." Drinan opined that Brennan's church-and-state jurisprudence will be "one of his great monuments." Of course, there are dissenting views, but they were not heard on ABC.

Then there was Candy Crowley of Cable News Network. Crowley baked a cake of such liberal bias that I reproduce some of it here, with bracketed questions that someone at CNN should have posed:

"The Brennan departure has . . . caused concern [*where?*] over the survivability of affirmative action programs. In civil rights circles [*which ones?*] there is fear that a Supreme Court with a philosophical scale weighted to the right will no longer be on course for social change [*why do you assume this is the court's role?*].

"Also seen at risk [*by whom?*] in a Court without Brennan are the limits of individual freedom [*do you mean to imply that individual freedom is never to be limited?*] . . . Civil libertarians [*again, which ones?*] also worry that a whole range of protections for a criminal defendant may come under fire [*others think this is good; where are they?*] . . . "

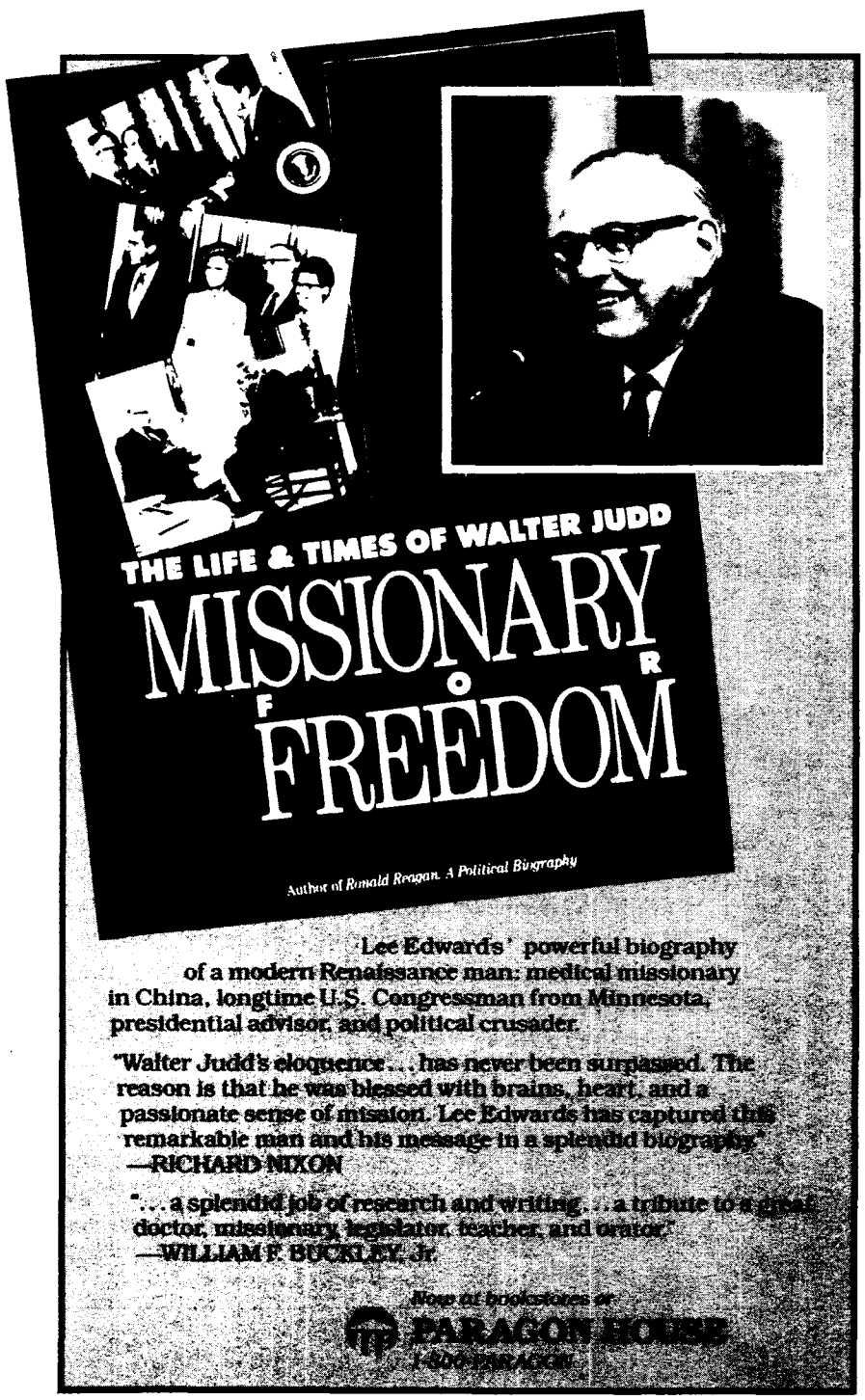
The pap served up by Crowley, Brennanite high priestess of the hot media, is unlikely to appear in the news pages. Linda Greenhouse of the *New York Times* included opponents as well as supporters in her retrospective on Brennan. So did Fred Barbash of the *Washington Post*. Writing against deadline the day Brennan stepped down, David Lauter of the *Los Angeles Times* detailed Brennan's performance in *Baker* v. *Carr* (1962), the landmark redistricting case, illustrating the activist Justice's willingness to push his colleagues to focus on matters other than the law itself in deciding cases.

Still, the print coverage tended to portray Brennan in terms he would have liked—as the great champion of rights and liberty. Curtis J. Sitomer of the *Christian Science Monitor* called him the keeper of "the flame of individual rights." Stephen Wermeil of the *Wall Street Journal* characterized the Justice as "the Court's most ardent defender of individual rights and liberties."

Such descriptions are fine for editorial pages, but not the news columns. Even Brennan conceded that not all the rights and liberties he defended were found in the text or history of the Constitution. Leaving aside the vital question of judicial authority to enforce extra-constitutional rights, judicial defense of such liberties can also infringe upon the liberties of others. Justice Antonin Scalia made this point in his plurality opinion for the Court in *Michael H.* v. *Gerald D.* (1989). Indeed, he made it at the expense of Brennan:

> We do not accept Justice Brennan's criticism that this result "squashes" the liberty that consists of "the freedom not to conform." It seems to us that it reflects the erroneous view that there is only one side to this controversy—that one disposition can expand a "liberty" of sorts without contracting an equivalent "liberty" on the other side. Such a happy choice is rarely available. . . . Our disposition does not choose between these two "freedoms" but leaves that to the people of California. Justice Brennan's approach chooses one of them as the constitutional imperative, on no apparent basis except that the unconventional is to be preferred.

Whether or not one agrees with Scalia, to see Brennan as the great champion of rights and liberties is simplistic.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Indeed, the Brennanite vision of the Court as the keeper of the flame of individual rights lies at the heart of the controversy over constitutional interpretation and judicial authority in our time. It would have been fairer, for example, for Curtis Sitomer to have written that Brennan "understood himself as keeping the flame of individual rights, even though some critics say they are not found in the Constitution."

Unfortunately, the journalism in the wake of Brennan's departure only confirmed the tendency of the media to see the Court in political terms. Consider the *Washington Post*'s leading headline: "Liberal Justice Brennan Quits Supreme Court/Giving Bush Chance to Buttress Conservatives." Of course, virtually any headline or news account will provide evidence for my point, which is that journalism invariably talks about the Court in "liberal" and "conservative" terms.

I fault not journalism but the Court itself. Its unauthorized intrusion into areas previously reserved for the people to decide, either privately or through the states or Congress, has turned it into a much more visible—and controversial—political institution. Since Brennan helped push the Court into such matters as abortion, it is fair to say that the terms in which the Court and its work are reported today owe much to his tenure. Gone are the good old days of thirty-four years ago, when *Time* magazine needed only to report, in a small box, no more, the nomination of William Brennan. By the way, the headline in that box bore the notably apolitical headline, "A Happy Irishman." Now the Happy Irishman can read about what a liberal he was.

The hearings on the man nominated to replace Brennan, David Souter, will be gaveled down approximately with the arrival of this issue of *TAS*, assuming the media reports nothing controversial that might lead to postponement—or worse. But if there is no media firestorm in the first few days of a nomination, there will generally be none later on, and four days after Souter's nomination, the *Washington Times* reported that "hard-digging reporters" were finding their "shovels bare" on the Souter beat. Bare, and bent.

If the strongly pro-life Edith Jones, the only other person President Bush interviewed, had been nominated, there would have been a ruckus immediately. A reporter on a search-and-find-nothing mission to Souter's hometown of Weare, New Hampshire, told me that between the Brennan retirement and the Souter nomination she got plenty of calls from people wanting to say negative things about Jones, a federal appeals court judge. Whether or not Bush gets the jurisprudence he wants from Souter, he at least is getting a non-news story during the nomination phase.

There is occasional bias in the reporting on Souter. *Time*'s Margaret Carlson, in her cover piece on the nomination, wrote: "Souter's conservative philosophy alternatively pleases and confuses both ends of the political spectrum and is a reminder that the label does not belong only to Jerry Falwell and Jesse Helms"—as though the latter two were fully representative of American conservatism. Would Carlson write of someone's liberal philosophy that it "is a reminder that the label does not belong only to Tom Hayden or Mayor Barry"?

Are the media napping, or what? At his press conference announcing Souter, President Bush was asked about Chief of Staff John Sununu's role in the selection. The President said there was "almost a certain recusal on the part of Governor Sununu on this." But in newspaper accounts appearing soon thereafter, Sununu freely discussed his role, telling the *Washington Post* that


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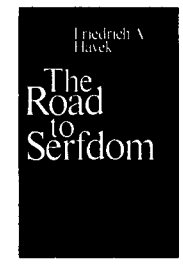

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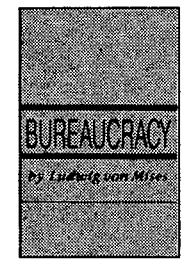

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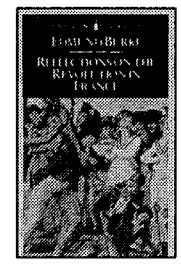
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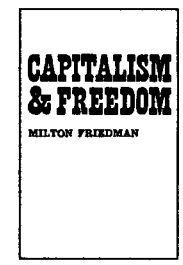

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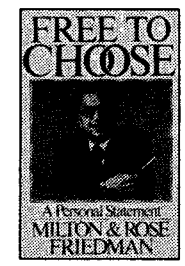

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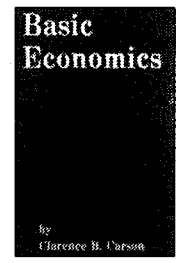

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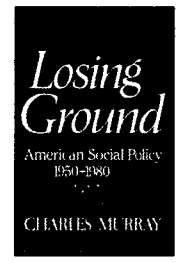

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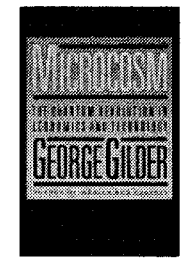

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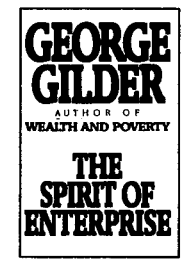

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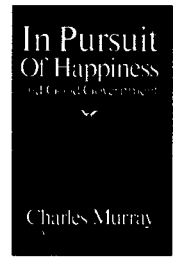

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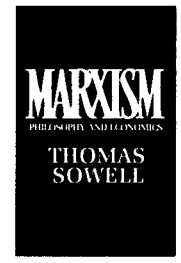

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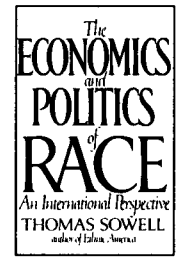

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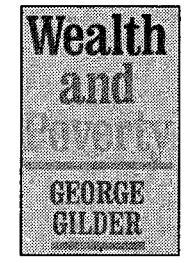

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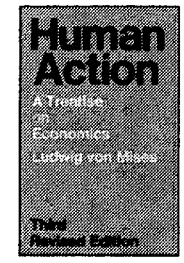

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he was "not shy" about endorsing Souter. If this is "almost a certain recusal," I'd like to know what George Bush thinks a real recusal is. Nor did any observe the contradiction of Sununu going public to explain a process he *had not* been involved in.

In any event, Sununu had to have been involved; no chief of staff isn't in a matter as important as a Supreme Court nomination. And I'll bet Sununu was behind the idea—put out anonymously on the same news cycle as the Brennan retirement stories—that renominating Robert Bork also was under consideration. This bit of "news" appeared in the ninth paragraph of the *Post*'s story. My guess is that it was a serious proposal, not merely Sununu's way of mooning anti-Bork liberals.

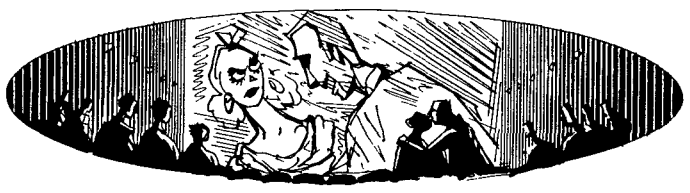
Administration officials have no strategy for getting Souter confirmed, unless answering no questions and sending out no information counts as a strategy. This will work well enough, provided Souter remains non-controversial and substantively anonymous. If he does come under attack, the White House will have to cobble together a public affairs plan with the President taking the rhetorical lead, exactly what the Reagan White House lacked when Bork drew fire.

Finally, speaking of justices, on an edition of ABC's "Prime Time Live" Justice Thurgood Marshall told Sam Donaldson that he considered Bush "dead" and that Chief of Staff Sununu was "calling the shots" at the White House. He also belittled David Souter, saying that he had called his wife and asked, "Have I ever heard of him?"

Donaldson didn't criticize Marshall for these outrageous remarks. Nor did anyone else in the Washington media, except the *New Republic*, which acidly observed that Marshall "showed what happens when he gives an opinion without help from his clerks."

This is hardly the first time Marshall has said amazing things to the press, though it is the first time he has said a President is "dead" and dumped on someone soon to be his colleague. Why do the daily media indulge this Justice? Is journalism afraid of taking on the first and only black on the Court? Or is it somehow impertinent to probe what motivates a Justice to say such things, to ask a question or two? □

# THE TALKIES



## MS. POLHEMUS, SHE DEAD

by James Bowman

After nearly a century of it, do we still thrill to that *Heart of Darkness* stuff—how thin the veneer of civilization over the savage substance of our hearts, etc., etc.? They released a remake of *Lord of the Flies* earlier this year, but I didn't see it. Neither did anyone else, to judge by the length of its run. Yet there may still be some life in that Marianas trench of meaningfulness. Two of this summer's hit films, *Presumed Innocent* and *Mo' Better Blues*, reverse the usual procedure and, instead of taking civilized folk to a more primitive world, bring the primitive into the midst of civilization—from which, of course, it never really departed. The results are not uninteresting.

*Presumed Innocent* has problems. It could be better paced, and Harrison Ford in the role of prosecutor/defendant Rusty Sabich, looks almost wooden—perhaps the film is too true to the book in this respect. Author Scott Turow's Sabich was a guy with a stoic exterior and a rich interior life. Without the lyrical and philosophical tendency he is a man who, as Dorothy Parker said of Katharine Hepburn, runs the gamut of emotion from A to B.

But *Presumed Innocent* is one of those films that is better than the book, and for the usual reason. Where Turow's novel tries to tackle too many big issues, the screenplay by Frank Pierson and Alan J. Pakula, the film's director, does well to cut the lyricism and a lot of other excesses, mainly of the lawyerly or cops 'n' robbers kind. In doing so they have changed a page-turner about a respectable prosecutor's sexual obsession, the secret lives of two different women, and the suspense and horror of being on trial for your life, into an elegant meditation on law and loyalty. *Presumed Innocent* is now at the top of the paperback best-seller list—as its successor, *The Burden of Proof*,[1] sits atop the hardback list—but the real highbrow will pick the movie.

In the novel, the question of motive is uppermost. Why did the murderer leave the glass with Rusty's fingerprints on it at the scene of the crime? In the film there is no discernible motive; the glass sticks out like a sore thumbprint. But that hardly matters. By the time our attention is focused on it we are concerned instead with Detective Lipranzer's withholding it as evidence in the belief that Rusty is guilty. His act of loyalty in defiance of truth and justice casts into ironic shadow the pretentious voiceover about such things that begins the movie as the camera pans around an empty jury box.

Lipranzer's extralegal conception of justice prepares us for the astonishing dénouement, which in the novel precedes it and gets lost amid a lot of anticlimactic motive-mongering. The film ends with a bang: the murderer's confession, where the sense that we are in a primitive world in which the only thing that matters is personal loyalty is doubly reinforced. Ultimately, Rusty's personal drama is less interesting, and Turow's insistence in the novel on following his marriage onto the rocks appears banal in comparison with the movie's terrifying final impression of a family united and able to absorb the knowledge of the horror that has sustained it.

That family loyalty remains problematical in the book adds something to the pleasure of the amateur psychologist but blurs a lot of connections that the film allows to stand out. The loyalty of defense counsel Stern and Prosecutor Raymond Horgan to Judge Lyttle, of deputy prosecutor Tommy Molto and pathologist Kumagai to Nico della Guardia, and of Rusty himself to Horgan and Lipranzer, undermines the ideal of justice at every point. The film cliché of Horgan, marveling that Rusty is "still holding onto the shreds of [his] ideals," is given a new twist when his cynicism is not only not reproved by the film but taken even further than he could imagine.

[1]Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $22.95.

*James Bowman is American correspondent for the* Spectator *of London.*



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The character of Carolyn Polhemus, the murder victim, is crucial here. "The lady was bad news," as Lipranzer says—because she operated entirely outside the system of loyalties that binds all the other characters. Her only loyalty was to herself. That in itself is enough of a reason for her death so far as Lipranzer is concerned. It is not that she is corrupt—everybody is. It's that her corruption is undiscriminating—blind, as justice is supposed to be—and not part of the normal give and take between prosecutors, police, and defendants.

In the only courtroom scene apart from Rusty's trial, Carolyn induces a small child to betray his mother and send her to prison for abusing him. We want her to succeed, of course, but at the same time we can't help noticing that the law at its most effective is precisely an instrument for breaking down the basic loyalties that we may, in the end, decide are more important than abstract ideas of equity. That's why nobody loves a stool pigeon.

Carolyn's moral ambiguity in this exercise is lost upon the admiring Rusty, but she derives her strength and something of her sexiness from the fact that she embodies what the law is essentially all about: it is divorced from personal loyalties. No ties, no doubts, no regrets. She is the perfect extramarital affair.

What is most strange by the end of the movie is not that Rusty's ideals remain intact but that they were so naive—as if we would even *want* disinterested justice. It is the law of his childish idealism, which is so blind to the truth that it nearly crushes him; and what saves him from the law is not his ideals but primitive and extralegal loyalties. That is why Pakula rearranges the ending to allow two characters' loyalty to Rusty to take precedence over the law.

If the rule of law is irrelevant to Pakula, something like it (if not precisely it) remains ideal to Spike Lee. His *Mo' Better Blues* is long, boring, and self-indulgent, but it does manage to cast a different light, from the point of view of a black ghetto culture with few pretensions to Rusty's civilized ideals, upon the Hobbesian darkness.

Denzel Washington plays a jazz trumpeter, Bleek Gilliam, who has learned something about the value of order and discipline. By applying a set of rules to his own life and his band, he has risen to success in the jazz world. Of course, it is too good to last. He has problems with women, problems with jealousies and indiscipline, and problems with the inept management of an old school friend named Giant, played by Lee. All his problems, however, can be seen as different manifestations of the black community's values, which he has had to rise above in order to be successful. For the ghetto culture from which he is never quite able to extricate himself is inhospitable to discipline and rule. His girlfriend will not let him alone during the time he has set aside for practice, his band resents his dominance and the rules that express it, and his personal loyalty to the ne'er-do-well gambler, Giant, ultimately costs him his career.

Giant represents the drag of ghetto culture upon talented black individuals. He is constantly making appeals to Bleek's loyalty. Doesn't our friendship, dating back to the third grade, mean anything to you? asks Giant when Bleek decides that he's got to fire him. Of course it does, replies his friend: if it weren't for that I would have fired you long ago.

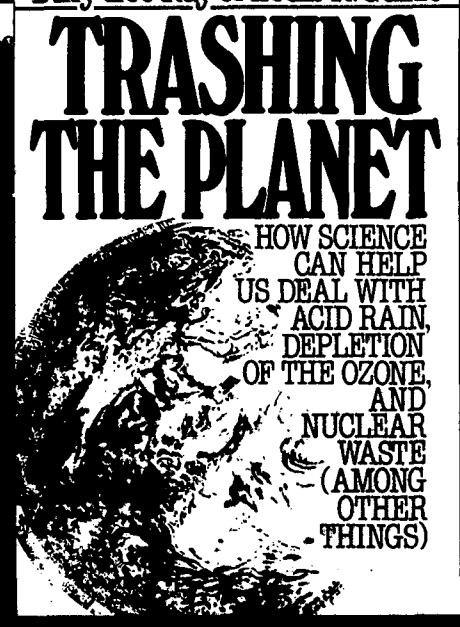
This constant, disingenuous appeal to brotherly solidarity comes across as delightful self-mockery in a film in which both Lee and his sister star and for which his father wrote the music, but there is a serious point to it as well. As in *Presumed Innocent*, personal and family loyalty is the enemy of law and rule, as well as of the individualism of the ambitious. There is a scene after Bleek's downfall in which he is shown in his once well-kept and ordered apartment, lying on the floor and positively gibbering in the midst of an appalling debris reminiscent of Giant's normal living conditions.

The collapse of individual order sums up Bleek's surrender to the anomie of urban black culture. Only a black man could get away with such a portrayal today, and Lee deserves credit for not sentimentalizing negritude or wallowing in victimization. Even the saccharine ending, in which we see Bleek's young son learning the trumpet and something of his father's discipline, seems less glib than it would in another context. Here, progress is inevitably slow and measured in generations.

Although it is capable of irony about black aspirations, *Mo' Better Blues* doesn't allow itself to doubt that they are achievable through escape from an essentially primitive and extralegal set of social arrangements based on status and group loyalty. *Presumed Innocent* also takes these primitive arrangements as the norm, but, because it begins with the assumption of something more enlightened and civilized, its vision has the power to shock.

Yet its doubts about what it really means to be civilized do not seem to me to be despairing either. Here the web of tribal and familial loyalties has an almost warm and reassuring feel—which is really what shocks us about it: the icy individualist, Carolyn Polhemus, is expendable to us as well. □


Dixy Lee Ray & Louis R. Guzzo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# CHARLES REICH'S CON JOB

## *The Greening of America* Turns Twenty

Thomas Mallon

It was twenty years ago today, Professor Reich taught the kids to say: Consciousness III is coming. My college sociology prof, who took it all quite seriously, called it "Con III." Con I, you may recall, was pre-industrial and Jeffersonian, occasionally admirable but much too dumb and not very groovy. It was killed by the machines: "Independence was replaced by a grumbling servility; the worker must submit to the authority of the bosses; all sense of power and potency passed out of his hands." The next Con, the technocratic Con II, reached its sad maturity with the New Deal, which "did succeed in coping with the Depression emergency, which might have brought down the whole system, but the system's problems were preserved along with it." The good news, back in 1970, was that Con II had "worn itself out, fighting the know-nothingism of an earlier America," leaving room for, yes, Con III.

Professor Reich uses his very first paragraph to let the reader know that the old order giveth way to the new:

> America is dealing death, not only to people in other lands, but to its own people. So say the most thoughtful and passionate of our youth, from California to Connecticut. This realization is not limited to the new generation. Talk to a retired school teacher in Mendocino, a judge in Washington, D.C., a housewife in Belmont, Massachusetts, a dude rancher in the Washington Cascades.

Let's saddle up and ride with him once more, out of the "one vast, terrifying anti-community" that is America. Millions of Americans did, from installment to installment in the *New Yorker* and then through the hardback edition of October 1970. By that time, Charles A. Reich, the 42-year-old Yale law professor who had started his career at Cravath, Swaine & Moore, was the favorite new thinker on campus. How many poor parents must have opened their presents on Christmas morning 1970, to find what Junior had gotten for them, for $7.95, at the college bookstore. Oh, thanks, son.

Professor Reich was forthright about his dislikes, which included the "cruel deception" persuading Consciousness II "that the richness, the satisfactions, the joy of life are to be found in power, success, status, acceptance, popularity, achievements, rewards, excellence, and the rational, competent mind." Yes, those are a few of his least favorite things. Besides them, he rails against nightmarish coercions: "A high school boy must cut his hair or be suspended, a civil servant must refrain from political activity, a college teacher must publish in scholarly journals." He decries stuffy apartments and warns against some shocking consumer dangers: "Some products are showing a noticeable deterioration in quality, others can be frighteningly dangerous in the wrong hands (an oven cleaner that can damage the eyes)." Uptight Con II professionals, he laments, "do not listen to music together, or lie on the grass and look at the sky together, or share food, or sit silently and exchange vibrations." (You will argue perhaps that I am quoting Professor Reich out of context. Trust me: he is that rare thing, an author who *benefits* from being quoted out of context.)

The chief difference between Cons II and III is that the former "has been convinced that man's needs are best met by trying to *dominate* experience rather than being subject to experience." The latter goes, as it were, with the flow. Reich doesn't like to describe it too "systematically and analytically," because to do that is to "engag[e] in an intellectual process which Consciousness III rejects." But he knows what he likes, bell-bottomed pants for one thing. They "have to be worn to be understood. . . . No one can take himself entirely seriously in bell bottoms. Imagine a Consciousness II university professor, or even a college athlete, in bell bottoms, and all of his pretensions become funny; he has to laugh at himself." (Imagine a bell-bottomed sailor in the U.S. Navy yukking it up while looking through the cross hairs of the five-inch gun he's firing at the North Vietnamese coast.) Con III freaks and chicks burn incense at home "to restore the sense of smell," and marijuana effects something like "what happens when a person with fuzzy vision puts on glasses." Helpful, no doubt, in finding the fridge as the munchies kick in. And when they do kick in, "a single pizza or a single Coke is passed from person to person in the same room; the group is sharing its bread and wine." Surfing—as opposed to status-conscious skiing—is cool: "In the world that now exists, a life of surfing *is* possible, not as an escape from work, a recreation or a phase, but as a *life*—if one chooses." (Actually, a life of surfing has always been possible if you were willing to hang ten over dad's wallet.) The new music is the most outasight thing of all: "It has a complexity unknown to classical music, even to symphonies written for full orchestra." But Reich rolls Beethoven over very gently: "It is no criticism of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century geniuses to say that today's music has found a world they never knew."

A little child shall hustle them. Reich's dedication offers his book "*FOR THE STUDENTS AT YALE, WHO MADE THIS BOOK POSSIBLE, AND FOR THEIR GENERATION.*" As a prof, he is not just kiddie-whipped; he's kiddie-worshipping: "The young people start with entirely different premises, and all is revealed to them." Their faces "seem to have lived more, even in their short years," but their road "is open to all others." More than anything else, *The Greening of America* sounds like the book of a professor who hopes to score with his students.

One's pen could run dry writing "Evidence?" in Reich's margins. His motto seems to be a variation on one of his era's mottoes: if it feels good, say it. His generalizations are not gross; they are intergalactic. He constructs Con III in the same self-delighting manner with which a science-fiction writer concocts and codifies a planet: "The individual must define his own career and his own terms. He must continually remake his definition as he learns more about himself and his world. That does not mean, however, that a personal definition will not include careful training for competence and excellence." In describing the dreary Con II world still teetering in place, Reich asks his readers to swill it down whole hog after whole hog, providing not even the sort of evidence Ronald Reagan's detractors used to characterize as "anecdotal." On the subject of unsatisfying work, this is his idea of an "example": "There is, for example, no advertising designed to create pride in craftsmanship or in a worker's self-discipline. Nor is anyone convinced that he should work for the good of the

*Thomas Mallon's most recent book is* Stolen Words: Forays Into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism *(Ticknor & Fields).*



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community." That's right—*not one single person, anywhere.*

And where, long time passing, have all the New Dealers gone? "Nearly all of them took jobs where they served the very interests which were the enemies against which the New Deal fought. Many became highly paid corporate lawyers, using their know-how to help their clients avoid attempts at public regulation. Many others served as executives of large corporations. They adopted the life-style of wealth, power, and success." "Naming names" was always a left-wing bugaboo; perhaps that's why Reich almost invariably declines to name a single member of any category he devises in a book that shows an almost Dantesque love of classification. (The only bit of hard information, of a rather wistful kind, in the passage quoted above, is that in the fall of 1970 acceptance of the word "life-style" was still tentative enough for it to require a hyphen.)

Reich's evidence tends to come more from literature than from life. Freshman classics like Melville's *Bartleby* and *Death of a Salesman* come in handy, though Vonnegut and Kesey (that "remarkable book, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*") and R. Crumb's *Head Comix* (twenty-six lines of "Stoned" are quoted) are the really important belletristic buttressings. Beyond even these are the moviemakers, who "especially" come "quite close to the truth" about society. Reich produces a lot of movie-trailer prose ("a scene as beautiful and awe-inspiring as anything ever put onto film"), and displays a general tendency when discussing all aspects of artistic endeavor to write the way Joel Siegel talks.

As for Reich's view of the middle class, it is hard to separate smirking pity from hatred. He writes that "No person with a strongly developed aesthetic sense, a love of nature, a passion for music, a desire for reflection, or a strongly marked independence, could possibly be happy or contented in a factory or white-collar job." I guess that lets out Wallace Stevens back at the Hartford, though it doesn't stop Reich from using a Stevens verse as one of his three epigraphs. He also declares that "a truly sensitive person just could not stand to ride to New York on the Penn Central railroad." Thank heavens bankruptcy would soon put all those *poetes maudits* out of their commuting miseries. It is Consciousness III, by the way, not II or I, that "can appreciate Vivaldi as well as the blues."

The fundamental spirit of *The Greening of America* is, of course, totalitarian. Private property is referred to in quotation marks, and election results are subject to interpretive dismissal. We are told that in 1968 "the people never got a chance to vote for Gene McCarthy." In fact, they did, in a number of primaries, many of which he lost. Again, we learn that in 1968 "a majority of people certainly wanted peace, but they could not turn their individual wills into action by society." Actually, they did want peace, but they were disinclined toward surrender; the disinclination being stronger than the desire, they chose continued war. It was quite logical, and quite democratic. At times Reich seems to take Peter Pan's method for his own ("Now all we have to do is close our eyes and imagine that everyone has become a Consciousness III: the Corporate State vanishes"), but the language of the re-education camp has a way of poking through: "The young people of Consciousness III see effortlessly what is phony or dishonest in politics, or what is ugly and meretricious in architecture and city planning, whereas an older person has to go through years of education to make himself equally aware."

Reading Reich in 1990 is not purely an exercise in nostalgia, because his style of thought (it has no substance, but it does follow a recognizable mode) is still quite alive, at least in one place. That place is the university campus, which, like The Grateful Dead, just keeps rolling along, with programs in American Civilization presided over by professors who have the same cartoonish, middle-class-hating views as Reich. Having failed to remake the larger world, they have settled for running a toy one, creating a mad new arts curriculum and viewing the outside world with appalled contempt. They profess belief in town-gown "Community," but that community usually means the radical and disadvantaged and not the wage-earners, who are regarded as society's pitiable androids. This is what Reich says about "the tragedy of the white-collar and blue-collar worker": "If they had an individual excellence or greatness, in some area, it has been passed over by society; they are Joan Baez or Bob Dylan, working in a bank or a filling station until their minds and bodies have forgotten the poetry that was once in them. They are driven by outside authority, not merely that of the state and their employer, but by the nameless authority that says 'it must be done this way,' the authority of what Heidegger called 'the they.'" Why is truth so imperceptible to the *them*, that is, the gas-pumping, check-cashing, would-be troubadours? Only "because the organization keeps everyone so busy."

Oddly enough, the Con III sprites, with their unlimited power of choice—all of it paid for by the Con II drones—seem, as Reich describes them, more robotic than anyone: "All choices are the 'right' choice (for all lead outward) . . ." Con III types are so mellow and tolerant that they will find the good in everyone: "A person who thinks very poorly is still excellent in his own way." So let's not think of this as a lame book: let's think of it as a differently abled one.

One matter on which Reich differs measurably from the current Am-Civ crowd is that of drugs. They add, he declares, "a whole new dimension to creativity and to experience." Consciousness, Reich writes, "is a term that already has several meanings, including an important one in Marx, a medical one, a psychoanalytical one, a literary or artistic one, and one given us by users of hallucinogenic drugs." The other noticeable change between Reich and his Am-Civ heirs involves U.S. corporations. To Reich they are the omnipotent engines of oppression and psychosis: to today's Am-Civ lecturers they are pitiful giants, mocked for their weakness, scolded for letting everyone down by being insufficiently big and powerful and competitive.

When it comes to universities themselves, Reich deplores their continuing lack of imagination ("We cannot get beyond the idea that a university is 'private property' or that prose is different from poetry"), though he does note some encouraging developments: "Student ideas on curriculum have begun to get a response. A number of university presidents have been forced out." The degree of curricular change twenty years later would have astonished him, but he can take credit for contributing to the semantic debasement in which what have been called victim-based studies are now carried out. His passage about American high schools offers a perfect example of the new academic's self-satisfaction with metaphor. Pick something pointless and extreme and run it into the ground, and you'll dull the students into believing it meaningful: "What the school determines to accomplish it does so in a constant and total atmosphere of violence. We do not mean physical violence; we mean violence in the sense of any assault upon, or violation of, the personality. An examination or test is a form of violence. Compulsory gym,


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to one embarrassed or afraid, is a form of violence. The requirement that a student must get a pass to walk in the hallways is violence." This is the language of the race-, class-, and gender-obsessed courses, where feeling replaces thought, and analysis gives way to a self-congratulatory empathy. Reich professes to detest power ("The very *existence* of power is an evil"), but his descendants are preoccupied, above all else, with "empowerment."

Reich's style is reminiscent of a 1970 term paper composed in the course of a speed-driven all-nighter. Ignorance and vulgarity burp up from every page in self-parodic sentences that would earn a big, penciled "Good!" from more than one instructor of my collegiate memory and current acquaintance. The following instance of repetition is revealing: "In the executive suite, there may be a Léger or Braque on the wall, or a collection of African masks, there may be a vast glass-and-metal desk, but there is no one there. No one at all is in the executive suite." Did you hear him? *No one.* He's remade the point not because it may elude the reader, but because he thinks it's so profound it should be repeated for a hush or prolonged applause. It is a book one would have to be ashamed to have written, its success a more convincing example of "the shabbiness and tawdriness of American mass culture" than any cited by Reich himself. One is relieved to go back and find how bad many of its reviews were ("hard to excuse in a mature adult"—*Saturday Review*), but, then again, the popular press is usually less faddish and gullible than the professoriate.

Reich speaks of "conversions," convincing himself, as in a nerd's erotic dream, that everything will now be different: "What the new generation has already achieved is a way of being with other people that is closer, warmer, more open, more sensitive, more capable of sharing, than prior generations have known. It is as if some unseen divider, a glass partition, a plastic coating, a separate curtain of conversation, has been removed, leaving people effortlessly closer." If only it had lasted. By the mid-eighties, however, young people would be requiring that equally profound thinker, Oliver Stone, to tell them about the wrong turn they'd taken down Wall Street.

Of course, what Reich is talking about never really happened at all (people looked rather bizarre for several years and in all other aspects remained exactly the same), but even on a self-delusory level it didn't persist very long. Reich hopefully cites the evolution of Charles Goodell—one of those Republicans who "grew"—after Nelson Rockefeller appointed the congressman to serve out Robert Kennedy's Senate term: "New York's Senator Goodell, a backward-looking man when he represented an upstate constituency, grew sideburns and became a vocal liberal as he became the representative of the entire state . . . " The month after *The Greening of America* was published, the voters of the state of New York, in their first chance to vote on Senator Goodell, threw him out of office and replaced him with William F. Buckley's brother.

Reich wrote of middle-class families, circa 1970: "With the unerring perceptiveness of the child, their children have read these messages from the lifeless lives of their 'successful' parents, have seen marriages break up because there was nothing to hold them, have felt cynicism, alienation, and despair in the best-kept homes of America. And will have none of it." Actually they tried for all of it and have ended up complaining that downward mobility has left them with too little money to buy all the poison white bread for which they developed a late craving. *The Greening of America*, on its twentieth anniversary, is recommended to the very young, with one last warning: Never trust anyone over sixty. ☐


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As for fundamentalism in its Christian form, it's actually a new-fangled departure from historic Christianity; it is condemnatory of human nature, fearful of the body, suspicious of the intellect, and antagonistic to social justice. But mainstream, incarnational Christianity is, aside from some aberrations, none of the above; it affirms the transcendent dignity of the human person – body, mind, and soul.

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## TRIBES WITH FLAGS: A DANGEROUS PASSAGE THROUGH THE CHAOS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Charles Glass/Atlantic Monthly Press/510 pp. $22.95

Paul Johnson

If you had written an account of a journey through the Middle East, mainly concerned with the region's politics and tragedies, what would you put on the cover? A photo of one of its many gory episodes? A reminder of its countless natural beauties or art treasures? A reference to its unique position as the birthplace of the three great religions of the Book? Or even a map, perhaps? Charles Glass (or his publishers) rejected all of these possibilities. Instead, there is a portrait of himself, looking Byronic against a dark background, his handsome profile half concealed by a modest hand, on which a wedding ring glitters. The mood created is romantic. The effect is to suggest: here is an author who is himself a subject of interest—in his own way, perhaps, a man of destiny.

In fact, as the cynical will already have guessed, Glass is a TV news reporter. He has, however, personal links with the Middle East. His grandmother was actually born in the Lebanon of a landowning family in one of the feudal Maronite (that is, Catholic, in communion with Rome) villages. His great-grandparents immigrated to the United States at the turn of the century. Until 1975, his great-uncle had a butcher shop in the Lebanese town of Tripoli, where Glass used to visit him. He still has plenty of cousins there, though he is a bit confused about exactly how he is related to them. On this trip, one of them produced an 1830 deed, showing a stretch of land near Tripoli that had once belonged to his great-grandfather. His cousins were not quite sure where it was, but one "pointed out a large, bare plot of earth, and said: 'That is yours, there.' "

Glass speaks Arabic, too, albeit with an accent. Does he, then, identify with the Lebanese Maronites? Not really. What sensible man with an American passport would? When I first went to Lebanon in the 1950s, they were a rich, cultured, ingenious, self-confident, and wonderfully cheerful community. The battering they have taken since almost defies belief, and though their proverbial resilience kept them intact through the many difficult centuries, their future today is grim and their ultimate survival, at least as a significant, self-governing sect, must be in doubt.

On the other hand, Glass does not appear to identify with Americans either. Imprisoned in his left-wing media culture, he does not seem to understand what America and Americans are about. Where an Englishman like myself, looking back over the various American interventions in the Middle East, sees a very human mixture of benevolent idealism, a passionate, often misguided belief in the virtues of democracy, great generosity, some naivete, an element of self-interest, and much clumsiness and misjudgment, Glass sees dark motives, idiotic or sinister Cold War geopolitics, the satanic hand of the CIA, the malevolent influence of Israel. These attitudes seem to be deep-rooted in his personality and are probably ineradicable. He is about the last person on earth I would turn to for an explanation of what is happening today in the Middle East—a complicated place embittered by countless archeological layers of savagery and barbarism, especially since the end of Western dominance—for whose understanding a cool head, an absence of prejudice, and, above all, disbelief in conspiracy theory are all essential.

All the same, Glass had much of interest to record on his journey. His book is too long and is sometimes padded with quotations from his own writings—it would have been more readable and impressive if he had simply kept a diary—but there are some excellent passages. Glass may not understand the Middle East as a whole, but he is often illuminating on points of detail. He is particularly good on such ancient cities as Aleppo, Damascus, and Palmyra, which are brought to life by his combination of knowledge and local contacts.

In Alexandria and Antioch, for instance, he came across Turkish-Moslem converts to Christianity. Oddly enough, I have often thought that, despite the menacing power of Shia fundamentalism, or indeed perhaps because of it, the Middle East now offers matchless opportunities to evangelical Christianity, opportunities of the kind that are being eagerly seized and exploited in Central America, Brazil, and elsewhere in once monolithic Catholic America. But Glass's comment on the phenomenon is characteristically inept: "In the unlikely event of enough Turks becoming Christian now, the capital of the new united Europe might be Constantinople."

As a rule, Glass is guarded about writing directly on the subject of Moslem fanaticism, which would not fit in well with his underlying assumption that the West is to blame for all the woes of the area. When he asked a Christian woman in Alexandretta about relations between Christians and Moslems, she replied: "To them, we are *giaour*, Christians, Jews, and everybody." Readers of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* will recall that Anne Eliot and Captain Benwick have a discussion about how the title of Byron's famous poem should be pronounced: Glass says it should be "g'war." (The word is an abusive Islamic term for unbeliever.) Glass goes on to quote the woman: "We were having dinner at some Moslem friends' the other night. Our host was talking about people who had done something awful and he said they 'were just like *giaour*.' When he realized what he'd said, he excused himself, saying 'I didn't mean you.' "

Sometimes Glass's information has really nothing to do with the Middle East's problems but is revealing nonetheless. He writes that he has "seen generations of hookers come and go in Beirut." For a time, he said, "the Swedes were the favored prostitutes for the rich, and the Egyptians for the poor." Next, "in the lull between 1977 and 1980, British girls worked the bars in Phoenicia Street in west Beirut." Then when the fundamentalist militia closed the street, "I remember meeting girls from Peru." This time he found himself sitting at a bar with hookers from Colombia all around. One of them told him: "I have two children in Bogota. They have two and four years. Life is very bad in my country."

"It must be very bad if you have to come and work in Lebanon," Glass replies.

"It is very, very bad." And indeed, when you think seriously about it, the horrors that drove a woman 6,000 miles to seek her living in Beirut, one of the most uncomfortable and deprived, as well as one of the most dangerous cities on earth, must indeed be unique.

How has the human race contrived to create such hells at the end of the twentieth century? Nearly all of them are in areas formerly controlled by the European colonial powers, and hastily "liberated" in response to liberal opinion. Might not ordinary Colombians be happier and safer if once more ruled by imperial Spain, just as, most certainly, the inhabitants of the Lebanon and Iraq would be if still under French and British League of Nations mandates?

But this is idle speculation, is it not? Certainly, it would not be to the taste of Glass, for whom imperialism in its various forms is still the foe. In the event, anyone committed to the

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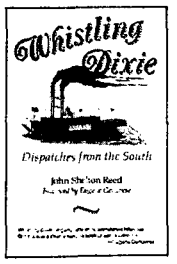


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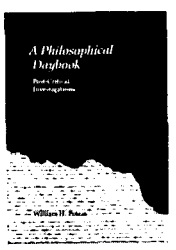

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view that the Middle East can only be pacified and made prosperous by bringing back the Western paramountcy that lasted from 1918 to the late 1940s—the happiest period in its entire history—would not survive long as a reporter of its current affairs.

As it is, journalists are at risk. Glass reminds us that in 1977 the London *Sunday Times* correspondent, David Holden, was found murdered after taking a taxi from Cairo airport; that mystery was never solved. He also recounts the experience of the London *Guardian*'s man, David Hirst, who was seized by West Beirut gunmen and flung into a car, but managed to throw open the door and run off. How had he found the courage? Glass asked. "I just couldn't bear the thought of being dropped down that black hole."

Towards the end of his book, Glass describes how he too was seized, with nowhere to run this time, and found himself right at the bottom of the black hole of Middle Eastern-Arab-Moslem fanaticism. He eventually escaped, in circumstances that many found mysterious at the time, but are here convincingly described. It was a very unpleasant experience, but it does not seem to have taught him much. □

## THE DARK ROMANCE OF DIAN FOSSEY

Harold T. P. Hayes/Simon and Schuster/351 pp. $21.95

Florence King

The six-foot-one, gun-toting virago whose sobriquet was "the gorilla lady" was not a woman to cross, but somebody finally did. On December 27, 1985, 53-year-old Dian Fossey was butchered at the Karisoke Centre for Mountain Gorilla Research in Rwanda, where she had spent eighteen years.

She was found in bed, her head split in two by a machete found nearby. Half-empty bottles of beer and scotch sat on her worktable beside an unloaded pistol. The murderer had entered her cabin through a hole cut out of the tin wall. The most puzzling aspect of the macabre scene was the hair clutched in her stiff hands: it was her own.

The Rwandan government tried and convicted Fossey's African tracker, who allegedly committed suicide in his cell. Her American assistant Wayne McGuire, whom she had bawled out two days before her death, was also convicted in absentia after he returned to the United States, but Rwanda has never tried to extradite him. Fossey was buried in the gorilla graveyard she started when her special pet, Digit, was killed by poachers.

Solving Fossey's murder was not the purpose of the late Harold Hayes, who died last year as he was completing this engrossing biography. Whodunit interests him less than whydunit, and here he hits paydirt, for there were very few people in Dian Fossey's embattled life who did *not* have a motive for murdering her.

Born in the Bay area in 1932, Fossey attended San Jose State College. "Drawn to children, especially helpless children," she became a physical therapist at a Louisville hospital. She refused to live in nursing quarters, living alone for ten years in an isolated cabin deep in the country, where she collected stray dogs instead of boyfriends.

A fervent desire to see exotic animals led her to borrow $8,000 and go to Africa. It was on this trip that her enormous ego first reared its head and gave hints of megalomaniacal excesses to come. Completely flat-chested, wheezing with emphysema from her three-pack-a-day habit, and often smelly from not bathing, she nonetheless thought every man she met was trying to seduce her, and hurled accusations of sexual harassment when they did not respond to her up-front offers. Hiring the last of the Great White Hunters, John Alexander, to take her on private safari, she laid it on the line: "Here we've been three weeks on safari. We could have shacked up together and had a hell of a good time." When Alexander modestly declined, she spread the story that he was "all over me all the time."

Her articles on the trip (and the accompanying photos that she "borrowed" from a more experienced photographer whom she neglected to credit) attracted the attention of Louis Leakey, who preferred female assistants for his ape studies because "women were more patient, more sensitive to mother-infant relations, and less likely to arouse aggression in males." Little did he know his latest Galatea would "go bushy," the African version of cabin fever, and nearly start a civil war.

Arriving in East Africa in the sixties "when just to be white was a risk to your life," Fossey found the Tugboat Annie boldness that ruined her sex appeal an advantage in the face of the Communist-inspired Simba incursions. Much of what happened in East Africa at this time was not reported by a press eager to put a good face on newly emerging nations, but Hayes fills in the blanks with some riveting passages:

> Led by witch doctors, the Simbas believed themselves impervious to bullets. They stoked their courage on hashish, and dressed themselves in monkey skins and whatever else might be at hand—lamp shades, women's panties, chicken feathers. . . . Many [of their victims] died by being forced to drink gasoline, then their stomachs were cut open and set on fire. One specially prized victim, a moderate politician named Sylvere Bondekwe, saw his liver cut out and eaten while he was still alive. . . . In their extended siege of Stanleyville years earlier, the Simbas had held 1,100 Belgians and Americans hostage. "We shall cut out the hearts of the Americans and Belgians and wear them as fetishes," the Simbas announced. "We shall dress ourselves in the skins of the Americans and the Belgians."

Joseph Mobutu, financed by the U.S. for his anti-Communist resistance, swore to put down the Simbas. Knowing the limitations of his own army—"In a crisis, Congolese soldiers tended to drop their guns, take off their shoes, and run"—he hired white soldiers of fortune to protect his position. When the white mercenaries, many of whom held Nazi-style racial views, turned against Mobutu and began killing their black comrades in arms, Mobutu ordered all whites killed.

It was at this time that Fossey claimed she was held for two days in a cage and "raped and raped and raped" by black African soldiers. No one knows what actually happened. One story has it that she was urinated on and otherwise humiliated, but that she escaped actual rape by defying her tormentors with the force of her rage, screaming, "You don't have the balls to rape me!"

It has the ring of truth, considering what we know of Fossey's hell-for-leather personality, and might have worked for a woman over six feet tall. Louis Leakey believed her story, but a son of Congo colonialists did not: "If any African raped a European in that part of the world, you might as well forget that European's existence. . . . You don't get out of those kinds of camps."

This same ex-colonialist, on discovering that Fossey intended to stay and study gorillas come hell or high water, gave her some practical advice:

> "The only option you've got to stay alive is to make yourself into some sort of spiritual witch. You've got to do this with such effectiveness and create such a sense of terror about you, people will give you a wide berth. All over Africa, there have been European women who lived on farms by themselves while their husbands went to war—my mother was one of them. The only way they survived was to become known as some sort of banshee. All Africans, you know, live in a spook land. They believe almost everything is invested with spiritual meaning. . . . I suggested she should make herself into someone no one would want to go *near*—that she should get wailing systems, smoke bombs, false faces, that sort of thing. And I told her to leave these things lying about everywhere, and to make sure everybody knew they were there.
>
> "At the same time, I told her she should beat the bejesus out of anybody she felt like beating the bejesus out of. And then they would get the feeling there was a woman up there who was behaving totally unwomanly."

This is precisely what Fossey did. To stop farmers from grazing their herds on the preserve, she shot a cow and vowed to shoot one a month: the grazing stopped. When farmers kidnapped her dog, she kidnapped eight of their cattle and spread the word that she would shoot one cow a day until she got her dog back: she got it back by nightfall. Abandoning her gorilla work to track the killers of a water buffalo, she fired a clip at them and, spotting one of their children hiding behind a tree, she kidnapped the child and offered to exchange him for his father's spear: she got the spear. "Naturally I

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*Florence King's latest book,* Lump It or Leave It, *was published in June by St. Martin's Press.*


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returned the brat," she wrote to Leakey.

A *National Geographic* producer saw her beat four African porters with her walking stick. Another saw her threaten a captured poacher with castration. "She would approach the poacher, holding pliers or machete, looking at that part of their anatomy. . . . All during the brutal ritual, Fossey shouted obscenities at the prisoner, a mixture of words that came into her head—English, French, German, Swahili, communicating a feeling of absolute outrage."

State Department cables flew when she asked the Rwandan government for permission to kill poachers on sight. "It is now only a matter for the President to give the order—KILL—[because] the prisons are already overcrowded and this is the only way we are going to be able to protect the remaining gorillas."

Word of her incredible courage began to spread. The Africans had never seen a woman like Fossey:

> In a country where women were subservient to men, this giant female *mzungu* [European]—looming over the pint-sized Hutu and Batwa—was subservient to no one. . . . So effective were her techniques of terrorizing the Africans that some members of her staff believed she had supernatural powers. One day, a tracker brought the body of a small child into her camp. He asked her to cure it, to bring the child back to life. He had no doubt that the white witch could do this.

That Dian Fossey was a Mean Green is indisputable. She was as wacky and brutal as today's battlers against "speciesism" who believe in civil rights for spotted owls, but the resemblance ends there. Unlike the tree spikers of Oregon, there was nothing sneaky about her, and she had guts. She operated entirely alone, committing all her outrages without the help of screaming minions on college break. Like Celine, whom the French government could not convict as a Nazi collaborator because, as the prosecutor said, he was too much of a loner to collaborate with anybody, Fossey simply disliked people in general.

"Female misanthrope" is almost a contradiction in terms. Women are supposed to be the heart of the body social, but ape ladies evidently do things differently. Speaking on conditions of anonymity, another female primatologist told the author: "I don't like humans. The monkeys allowed me to opt out, to get my need for social interaction and social closeness, so I didn't have to pay the price of human interaction."

So it was with Dian Fossey, a blip on the radar screen of Smile Button America. Harold Hayes's shrewd examination of her life raises interesting questions about whether the American commitment to extroversion as a national art form causes naturally aloof personalities to flower into deadly nightshade and seek solace in anthropomorphism. In any case, in an America drowning in Happy Talk and the tsk-tsking tut-tuttery of a President obsessed with the Politics of Nice, a book about a woman who refused a rabies vaccine with the comment, "I'm no more rabid than usual" is bound to be refreshing. □

## CHILD PRODIGIES AND EXCEPTIONAL EARLY ACHIEVERS

John Radford/Free Press/255 pp. $22.95

John R. Dunlap

At the age of three, under the tutelage of his father, John Stuart Mill learned to read Classical Greek. By the same age, Macaulay was reading abundantly in history, Mozart was playing the harpsichord, and Jeremy Bentham was reading Latin. Until the late nineteenth century, such occurrences of prodigious talent had been regarded with little more than vague wonderment, spiced now and then by folktales about the perils of genius. Musing briefly on the eighteenth-century literary prodigy Thomas Chatterton, who committed suicide at the age of seventeen, Wordsworth summed up the prevailing attitude towards young genius in calling him "the marvelous boy."

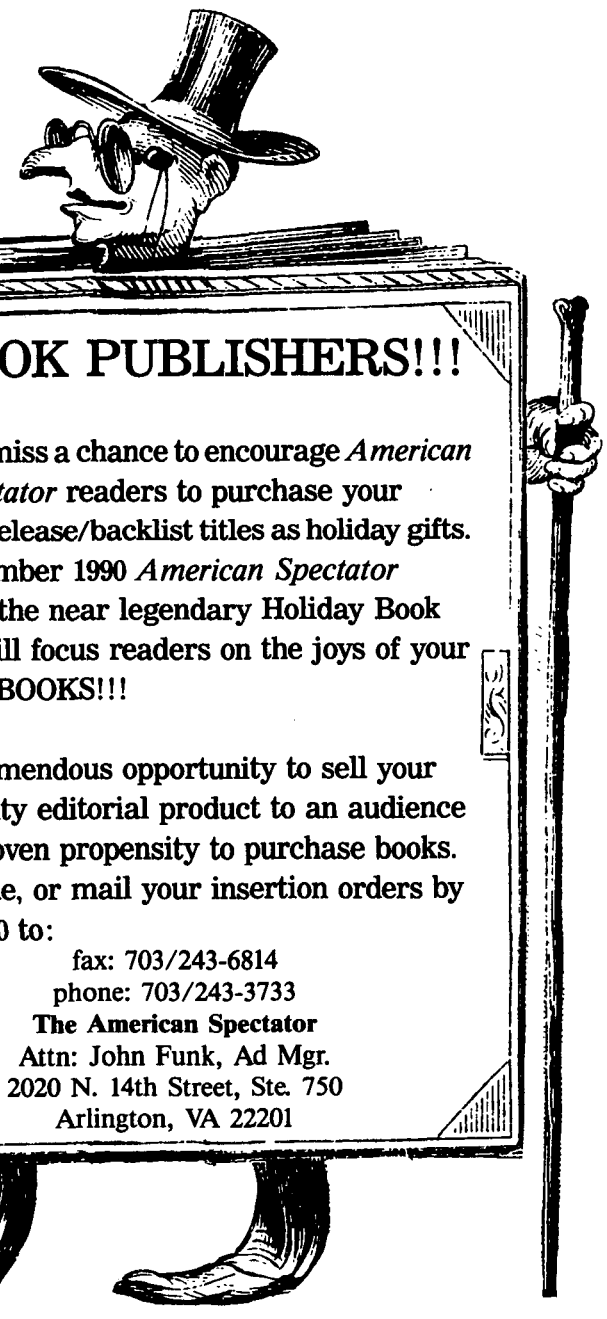
The acknowledged path-breaker in the field of what psychologists call "individual differences" was the English polymath Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911). Galton's *Hereditary Genius* put aside empty speculation to apply statistical procedures to the study of human ability. By "genius" Galton meant great ability as demonstrated by actual achievement, and in the backgrounds of a large sampling of eminent men (outstanding scholars, brilliant jurists, superior athletes, and the like: statistically, one person in four thousand of the general population) he discovered a tendency for genius to run in families.

Looking at the question from another angle, the Stanford psychologist Lewis M. Terman (1877-1956) popularized the term "genius" as referring to high intellectual potential rather than achievement. Galton had inspired the French psychologist Alfred Binet to develop the practice of psychological testing, and in 1916 Terman published the Stanford-Binet, the first individual intelligence test in the United States. It was Terman who introduced the notion of IQ (Intelligence Quotient), the now familiar measure of general intellectual potential.

Less well known is a lengthy experiment undertaken by Terman in 1921, the first and still the most extensive systematic study of gifted children. With their parents' approval, Terman selected 1,528 children whose tested IQs ranged between 130 and 190, a range inhabited by the top one-half percent of the general population. Every sociocultural group present at the time in California was included; exhaustive preliminary records were compiled (medical histories, physical measurements, school achievements, private interests, tested personality traits, etc.), and the program, despite a diminishing study group, has been carried on to this day in follow-ups by Terman and his successors, the most recent of five chunky studies having been published in 1987. Apart from many pleasantly counterintuitive discoveries (e.g., extremely bright children tend not to be nerds, not to have pushy parents, not to be maladjusted, not to burn out in early adulthood), Terman's investigations eventually led to the current interest in, and the grudging provision for, gifted children.

The upper end of the ability range has attracted far less research than the lower. In *Child Prodigies*, John Radford, a professor of psychology at the East London Polytechnic, attributes the downward-skewed interests of developmental psychologists to funding patterns, which in turn he attributes to "social and political factors too complex to analyze here" (he implies later that the "political factors" have

*John R. Dunlap teaches English at Santa Clara University.*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something to do with the democratic vice of envy). The consequence is that most studies of the extremely gifted have been ad hoc case studies, largely anecdotal and even impressionistic.

Radford thus admits in his final chapter that his "approach" is "that of the ragbag, or to dignify it with a scientific name, the inductive method." *Child Prodigies* is certainly a repetitious concatenation of fragmentary material, with a lumbering bibliography of 440 items cited through just 219 pages of text. But the real trouble is the writing. Despite many attempts at wit, Radford slips too comfortably into the gnarled syntax and misty jargon of the professional headshrinker, creating the impression that the study of genius has somehow become the scholarly preserve of dolts:

> If a prodigy is taken to be an individual whose early achievement in any field is exceptional compared with other members of a group with which that individual may be classed, which is the approach taken here, then awareness of as wide a range of potential talents and opportunities as possible, makes the best sense. But this is also true in general. A skewed distribution is not necessarily a discontinuous one, and it is not to be supposed that the gap between the child who attracts the label "prodigy" and the one who does not is necessarily empty.

A few hours of wading through such prose may tempt one to believe that the gap between Radford's ears is empty. With patience, though, one can extract many fascinating details that tease out some interesting questions.

Oddest, perhaps, is the question of whether prodigies can in some sense be produced. Sir Francis Galton—who had been a child prodigy himself, having learned to read at age two—was driven by his hereditarian conclusions to push for a program of national eugenics. In this endeavor he was joined by other part-time cranks, such as H. G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw, the principal theme of the movement being Galton's preachment that smart folks should be encouraged to intermarry. The movement foundered on popular indifference and intermittent farce; when a female admirer suggested to Bernard Shaw that he father her child so that the child would have her looks and his brains, Shaw demurred on the grounds that the result might be just the opposite.

In the years following his death, Galton's work was almost ritualistically faulted by psychologists for placing too little emphasis on the effects of privileged environment in the occurrence of genius. Galton, in fact, had acknowledged such effects, and more recent research has confirmed the stress he placed on heredity; the consensus today is to ascribe between 70 and 80 percent of intellectual ability to genetic endowment, whence the term "gifted" for children with outstanding capability. Asked at the age of four what she wanted to be when she grew up, Edith Sitwell replied, "A genius!" Of course she already was one—at least in Terman's sense of the word.

With all her native endowment, however, Edith—like John Stuart Mill and other celebrated geniuses—was gifted as well with a prodigiously attentive father. A recurring theme in *Child Prodigies* is the observation that gifted children tend to enjoy exceptional devotion from their parents. In some instances, the attention is obsessive, and there have been lurid tragedies like that of William James Sidis (1898-1944), the American son of a Russian émigré and "the world's greatest child prodigy."

By the age of three William was reading fluently; at five he was reading Russian, French, and German as well as English; he passed through grade school in six months, and before he was eight he had devised a table of logarithms using the base twelve instead of ten. He entered Harvard at the age of eleven, graduated at sixteen—and thereafter slid steadily into obscurity, low-paying jobs, destitution, and early death.

William's problem was his father, Boris Sidis, a Harvard mathematician and a publicity hound. The elder Sidis was a man of fanatic devotion—less to his son, however, than to his pet educational theories. He attributed his son's spectacular childhood achievements not to any native ability but to the regimen he imposed on William. Needless to say, Boris was not conspicuous for his warmth and parental affection.

With nature the main source of human ability, and with efforts to produce prodigies relegated for now to the kook bin, a more serious question posed by Radford's survey is how to nurture superior talent when it appears. The Terman investigations made it clear that most gifted children come from homes considerably more stable than the average. Among such children, obsessive or destructively eccentric parents of the Sidis variety are rare, and home life tends to be "abnormal" only in the sense of being unusually rich and stimulating. Radford's gripe, echoed lately by some British and American educators, is that the domestic lives of gifted children are not very well supplemented by a democratic educational system which caters to the average.

To be sure, gifted students are acknowledged in many public schools by special "programs," but the programs are erratic in quality and relatively underfunded. In 1983, for example, the state of California spent $17 million on 200,000 students enrolled in programs for the gifted, and nine times that amount ($153 million) on roughly the same number of handicapped students. The distribution hasn't changed, and some educators use figures of this sort to contend that the gifted are getting short shrift.

Although he doesn't pursue the point, Radford attributes such public policy to egalitarian resentment. The current age, he says, "seems marked by a hatred of what is outstanding or even what is different." But in the coming years, given the fashion of concern about declining American competitiveness, the likelihood is that gifted children will secure the public accommodation they deserve. It would be an irony most peculiar to our era if they had to do so by claiming victim status. □


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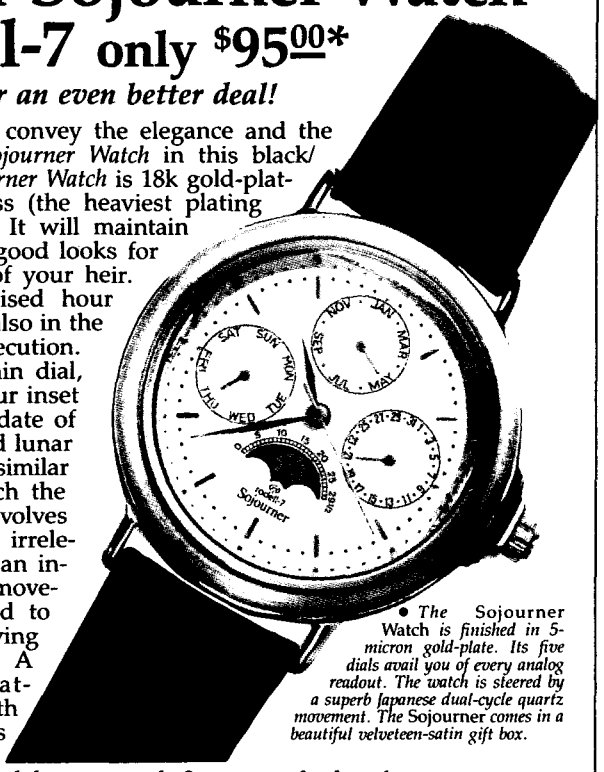


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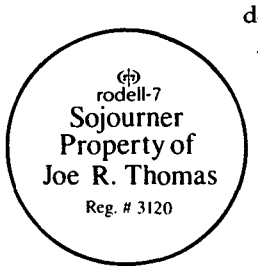


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## STALIN'S APOLOGIST, WALTER DURANTY: THE *NEW YORK TIMES*'S MAN IN MOSCOW

S. J. Taylor/Oxford University Press/404 pp. $24.95

Ronald Radosh

On the day it reviewed this book last June, the *New York Times* ran an unprecedented editorial by Karl E. Meyer, Jr., a member of its editorial board, commenting that the reporting of Walter Duranty during the 1920s and 1930s from the Soviet Union was "some of the worst reporting to appear in this newspaper." It was an amazing mea culpa, considering that Duranty won the Pulitzer Prize for precisely that coverage in 1932. His reports, the Prize Committee noted, were marked "by scholarship, profundity, impartiality, sound judgment and exceptional clarity," all these accolades for a reporter whose signal contribution was to cover up the Ukrainian famine of 1932-33. Duranty knew the facts and chose not to report them: according to S. J. Taylor, he issued a private report to the British Mission that 10 million may have starved during the collectivization drives.

Malcolm Muggeridge called Duranty "the greatest liar of any journalist I have met in fifty years of journalism." He had not always left this impression. Reporting for the *Times* from the French battlefields of World War I, he distinguished himself in vividly personal dispatches on the character of the fighting and the sacrifices of the Allied soldiers. His personal life, however, was always sordid, particularly after he fell in with the bizarre Aleister Crowley, known to British and Americans in Paris as a practitioner of black magic and occult orgies and an early dope fiend. It was under his guidance that the homely Duranty, for some reason always a charmer to women, began a series of *ménages à trois* that became a regular part of his life.

Ambitious and competitive, Duranty volunteered for and received the Moscow beat. It was his good luck to arrive just as Stalin was consolidating power, and, when others were hesitant to pick out which of the Bolshevik leaders would replace the dying Lenin, Duranty hitched his star to Stalin's rising one and rode it to fame and power. Before long his apologias and obfuscations would lead America's beleaguered anti-Stalinist left to refer to the *New York Times* as the "uptown Daily Worker."

Duranty's lies, unfortunately, affected others besides his readers, and had the true facts about the Communist-produced famine been made known, Taylor argues, the course of history might have been changed. Duranty had the opportunity to "save, perhaps, millions of lives. And he did not do it." Indeed, what is most upsetting is to read about the honors heaped upon Duranty for his offenses. He not only received the Pulitzer, but was also widely and fallaciously credited with arranging behind-the-scenes U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union. When Franklin D. Roosevelt announced recognition in 1933, Duranty traveled back to the United States in the company of Soviet ambassador Maxim Litvinov, giving the impression that much of what had occurred was his doing. A few days after, at a dinner honoring Litvinov at the Waldorf-Astoria, the assembled dignitaries rose to their feet and cheered when Duranty was introduced. Returning to Moscow, he received his ultimate payoff. Stalin summoned the correspondent to his Kremlin office for a one-hour talk. "You have done a good job," the dictator told him, referring to an interview that ran in the *Times*, " . . . because you try to tell the truth about our country. . . . You bet on our horse to win when others thought it had no chance and I am sure you have not lost by it."

The dictator had good reason to be pleased. Covering the very first purge trials of engineers accused of sabotage in 1928, Duranty had written in the *New Republic* that "most of the accused . . . deserve their fate." He explained the infamous Moscow Trials as part of the tragedy of the "Russian soul." The "confessions were true," he wrote, and he went on to explain in his autobiography that from 1934 on, the Soviet state had entered the phase of "secret conspiracy," which saw Japan and Germany plotting with Trotsky to overthrow the Soviet leadership. It was classic "applied Stalinism," as Taylor dubs it, and Duranty, a non-Communist, was the man spreading it through the West under the imprimatur of the *New York Times*.

From the point of view of power politics, Duranty had called the shots accurately. The late Averell Harriman said that Duranty advised him in 1926 that if he wanted a concession for exploitation of mineral deposits, the man to see was Stalin, not Trotsky. Harriman was offered his concession, although when Duranty told him he thought Lenin's New Economic Policy would come to a quick end under Stalin, the industrialist turned it down. As Harriman recalled decades later, Duranty's analysis "was the most penetrating of any reporter of the time." That judgment, coming from an Amer-

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ican capitalist trying to decide whether to sign a 20-year contract with the Soviets, allows us an insight as to why some members of the American establishment welcomed Duranty's reporting. Their concern was profit and loss, not whether Stalin was murdering millions of his subjects or whether a Western reporter was aiding and abetting him. Observes Taylor: "The Western establishment that feted him, no less than the Kremlin, had found their man."

Duranty's sole motivations were prestige, money, and influence. The man who coined the term "Stalinism" became, as Taylor writes, "the main source of information for the leftists of the 1930s," and thus helped fan the flames of Western Communism. It was he who first said that "you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs," which quickly became "the standard rationalization of Stalin's actions during the First Five-Year Plan . . . the brutal process of collectivization, the 'liquidation of the kulaks as a class'—and the devastating famine that followed." But he was not, as Eugene Lyons and others charged, a paid tool of the KGB. Most of the other Western correspondents—including later anti-Communists like Lyons and Louis Fischer—were equally guilty of not reporting the sordid reality of Stalinism. (Exceptions were Gareth Jones, Muggeridge, and William Henry Chamberlin.) As it turned out, Duranty became the symbol of "the West's failure to recognize and understand at the time" that the famine of 1932-33 was "the greatest man-made disaster ever recorded."

On the eve of war, the *Times* closed down its Moscow bureau. Duranty, returning to the United States, fell into alcoholism and quickly frittered away his earnings and reputation. He was resigned to living on funds borrowed from old friends like the now successful John Gunther, and to begging the *Times*'s publisher for a small pension.

Today Duranty is little known, but his story remains a parable for journalists who seek a place in the limelight by ingratiating themselves with those in power—for journalists who have no moral or human commitment to the truth. In our time, the sort of journalism Duranty practiced is reserved for papers like New York's *Village Voice*, which humiliated itself a few years ago by running a lead story attacking Robert Conquest's *The Harvest of Sorrow*, claiming that Conquest's thorough account of the Soviet famine was based on propaganda perpetrated by fascist Ukrainian refugees. Duranty's legacy is also carried on in the pages of the *Nation*, where Alexander Cockburn engages in arcane arguments about supposed exaggerations of the number of people killed under Stalin. One can only hope that our modern equivalents of Walter Duranty end their careers in the richly deserved obscurity in which Duranty ended his. □

## THE BROKEN APPLE: NEW YORK CITY IN THE 1980s

Herbert London/Transaction Books/212 pp. $24.95

Roger Starr

Herbert London played basketball on the only Jamaica (Queens) High School team ever to make it to the final round of the Public School Athletic League Tournament in Madison Square Garden. With this volume, London stakes his claim to being a triple-threat adult as well: Dean of New York University's Gallatin Division, a busy island of cultural conservatism at the edge of Washington Square Park; Conservative party candidate for governor of New York State; and author of this collection of newsletters, which have been sowing badly needed common sense among New Yorkers since 1985.

London knows that his chances of filling a vacancy in Albany's Executive Mansion are no better than those of a newcomer from Omaha finding a rent-controlled apartment on Central Park West. Yet he believes his campaign will force Governor Cuomo and Republican aspirant Pierre Rinfret to discuss the future of New York State government, instead of describing its citizens as one happy family (Cuomo) or explaining discrepancies between one's campaign biography and other bits of recorded history (Rinfret).

London's essays express wonder at the tremendous gap between the achievements of individual New Yorkers and the gross failure of their government to manage any of the activities the citizenry entrusts to it. Whether describing the sad state of the city's pavements, the unpardonable neglect of such essential facilities as the Williamsburg Bridge, the deplorable condition of the public schools, the loss of control in the parks, the ransacking of the treasury to pay for sculptural atrocities in public spaces, London falls just short of exasperation. *Don't you see why you are doing so much more poorly than you should be?* he seems to be asking.

London has an answer, expressed succinctly in a sentence or two: "Government is not going to change this city—if New York improves, it will happen because of private enterprise. It may surprise producers and soap-opera writers, but the spirit of free enterprise is alive and well and residing in the breasts of average people." The author is probably right; there is residual faith in the magic of private enterprise. Yet it coexists with an emotional state that surrounds and tends to smother it.

New Yorkers have a childish crush on government, remarkable given that few of the city's major achievements can be ascribed to the ability of the city or state governments to carry out the missions assigned to them. The skyscraper, New York's architectural logo, is almost always the product of individual risk-taking and private energy. The Brooklyn Bridge was built by a private syndicate clever enough to entrust it to John Roebling and his son. The city provided municipal loans to finance its first subway, but August Belmont organized the company that built it. Andrew Haskell Green and Frederick Law Olmsted, operating with a large measure of independence from ordinary municipal rules and regulations, produced Central Park.

The achievements of the Robert Moses era in highway construction, hydroelectric power, park development, and bridge-building were not in any organizational sense achievements of municipal government. Moses used his energy, dedication, homicidal tongue, and freedom from second thoughts to amass personal power that could be found on no government chart of organization. He paid for his projects not with local tax revenues, but with grants from Washington and the proceeds of bond issues that the state legislature allowed him to sell in the name of semi-autonomous authorities. They were called "semi" autonomous only because the buyers knew that in the event of a default the state would be forced to make good on them or find itself excluded from future credit.

This record has little effect on city dwellers, whose energies have curdled into resistance to any physical change, loss of belief in the possibility of progress, and a willingness to turn over any social problem, however complex, subtle, and long-lived, to government. Too jaded to believe that religious institutions can influence moral behavior, the best citizens call on government to help evade the consequences of promiscuity by distributing free condoms, encourage clean living by offering addicts new hypodermic syringes, and open a new era in human sexuality by instructing teen-age scholars in the moral neutrality of sexual "preference."

Through the London newsletters selected for reprint in this volume runs a constant theme—that New York City's center isn't holding. The "average" people to whom London refers repeatedly have not managed to find elected representatives who reflect their own sense of the chaos that must overtake a city that disdains the bourgeois values. While I thought twenty years ago that "average" people would fight to retain control of a city in which they could comfortably live, "average" people have in large part given up and moved out. Even if they did not move beyond the city's political boundaries, they moved to outskirts that resemble suburbs more than the political construct that bears the name "New York City."

Time and again, London touches on the disorder that comes from a tolerant affinity between the urban elites—the highly sophisticated professionals, the peace-seeking rich, the devotees who find art more real than life itself, the guilt-ridden products of contemporary higher education—and the new boozing, drugging lumpen proletariat throwing traditional mores to the wind, celebrating the hustle, and stamping on traditional values. Whether he is discussing graffiti, the homeless, or the replacement of traditional measures of accomplishment with ethnic quotas, London is seeking to appeal to the "average" people, abandoned by the top social strata and assaulted from the bottom.

Civil disorder, loss of pride, sacrifice of sound energy policy to pick up Long Island votes, fiscal chicanery that will inevitably end in destruction of the state's creditworthiness—these are the issues London raises in *The Broken Apple*. If London can collect the money, he could put together a ticket that would appeal to New York's "average" people. They include an increasingly bewildered black middle class, new immigrants from Asia, and what's left of the city's traditional working ethnics. Such a coalition would respond to civility as the central theme of his campaign. With such an alignment behind him, London might force Governor Cuomo to acknowledge embarrassing skeletons in the closet of the state "family" he idealizes. □

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*Roger Starr is the author of* The Rise and Fall of New York City *(Basic Books).*



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## THE FOLKS THAT LIVE ON THE HILL

Kingsley Amis/Summit Books/246 pp. $18.95

James Bowman

The title of this book makes ironic reference to a lovely if not very well-remembered Jerome Kern song that must have been a standard of Kingsley Amis's early adulthood:

> Someday
> We'll build a home on a hill-top high,
> You and I,
> Shiny and new,
> A cottage that two
> Can fill,
> And we'll be pleased to be called
> The folks that live on the hill.

That's what young people who, like the author, were getting married in the 1940s thought they had to look forward to in forty or fifty years' time. Well, now that time has come round, and he's here to take a wry look at how the youthful dream has turned out for his hero, Harry Caldecote, a retired librarian living amid the social inconsequence, if not chaos, of today's London. The answer is: not quite like the song's vision of love in age.

> And when the kids grow up and leave us
> We'll sit and look at that same old view,
> Just we two,
> Darby and Joan who used to be Jack and Jill,
> The folks who love to be called
> The folks who live on the hill.

In 1990 it's Darby and Joan who have left each other and the kids who are still around, staring out at the view. Harry, who lives with his sister, is divorced from not one but two wives, his son, who is approaching middle age himself, is still sponging off him, while the daughter of one of his ex-wives and the niece of the other are constantly appealing to him for help in various sexual and alcoholic crises that they have managed to get themselves into.

Harry Caldecote continues to take responsibility for this bunch of moral and emotional cripples not out of tender-heartedness but with the sort of gruff sense of what is appropriate that we would expect of Kingsley Amis himself. For it is one of the attractive things about Amis that he manages to write so well without making any concessions to the varieties of artfulness expected by the literary-critical crowd—who thus get very cross with him. There is no nonsense in his books about *point of view* or the ironic complexities of internal narration. In all of them there is simply an Amis surrogate who speaks with the voice of his creator and round whom everything in the fictional universe revolves.

It is a very egotistical way of writing, but Amis is essentially a pretty interesting guy: a wickedly funny observer of our favorite, late-twentieth-century brands of humbuggery. We can follow his career under various assumed names, from the youthful Jim Dixon of *Lucky Jim* to the not quite elderly Harry Caldecote of *The Folks That Live on the Hill.*

He is not a particularly even-tempered or *understanding* sort of person. When he was young he was constantly being rude about the old; now that he has entered into a not particularly graceful old age he has turned his rudeness on the young. Then he was full of impatience for the hypocrisy and stupidity of his seniors; now he is irritable about the fecklessness and irresponsibility of his juniors. And he knows a thing or two about women, too.

There has also been a degree of consistency over the years. For some of the things he excoriated in the older generation in his youthful novels are the same as those that he attacks in the younger generation now. These include above all the phoniness of the high-minded, whether they are older people mouthing platitudes to the resentful young or young people psychobabbling to the uncomprehending old. Harry's advice to one of his young and rather tenuously attached protégés—the ex-husband of his ex-step-daughter—who is momentarily prey to self-doubt could stand as the motto not only to this book but to the whole of Amis's oeuvre:

> "Listen, sonny," said Harry, glaring and grating a little. "We do quite enough we know the reasons for without having to start worrying about what we do that we don't know the reasons for, in other words when we do something for a reason we don't know about it's the same morally as not doing it for that reason. S---, but you see what I mean."
> "Yeah. Thanks."
> "To put it more simply, you start thinking there's something in what Philippa says and *you're f---ed.*"
> "Now you're talking. Same again?"

Self-doubt has no place in Amis's universe, though a kind of self-mockery, as in the slurred punctuation there marking Harry's scamper across the brittleness of his own subtlety, is always welcome.

And we *do* see what he means. It is that the attempt to understand or define or *find* ourselves is often just an excuse for the neglect of those duties that do not depend upon understanding but whose performance is the prerequisite of self-definition. Harry's sister Clare is one of those who has learned that you can't wait upon understanding: you understand people less as you get older. Likewise, everybody complains about Harry's selfishness, but it is he to whom they turn in a crisis, he who makes things happen in their lives, because of an old-fashioned feeling of responsibility for those who have learned to look to him for help—even if, as so often, they have done so on account of their own moral feebleness.

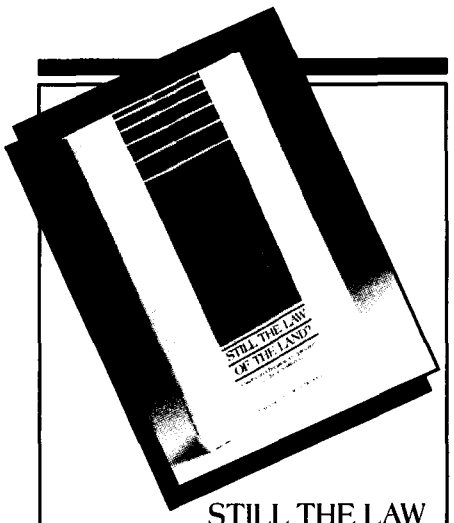
What marks this old devil off from his young dependents, that is, is this sense of decency, a product of his age and class, which somehow, in all the urgency of the task of finding out who they were back in the sixties and seventies, the young neglected to acquire. Now they continue to pass through their crises of identity while a few relics of the old world like Harry and Clare are left to pick up the pieces even as they remind each other that "nothing says we have to understand and so sympathise with and therefore somehow tolerate everybody." Among their neighbors, only the Pakistani shopkeepers, Howard and Charles, share this sense of decency with them. Having learned it from their traditional culture, they now seem, as the saying goes, more English than the English—because Britain has ceased to be such a traditional culture.

Nor can we dismiss the novel as a curmudgeonly diatribe against the young—though it is that, among other things. For Harry's brother, the failed poet Freddie, and his ghastly wife, Desirée, are there to remind us of how the sense of responsibility in traditional relationships can be used as a mere tool of manipulation. Freddie was one of those fifties poets who had set out to "forge a personal diction" which to Harry was just "the sort of thing that poets said they were going to do in those days to show what sound chaps they were. Like . . . like giving the Hun a taste of his own medicine." That quasi-heroic pursuit of personal authenticity has now ended in the grim travesty of Freddie's utter thralldom to his wife. He too depends on Harry—to provide him with moments of escape from his prison of domestic entanglements.

Even Clare, whose own sense of decency leads her even to the point of

*(continued on page 49)*

*James Bowman is American correspondent for the* Spectator *of London.*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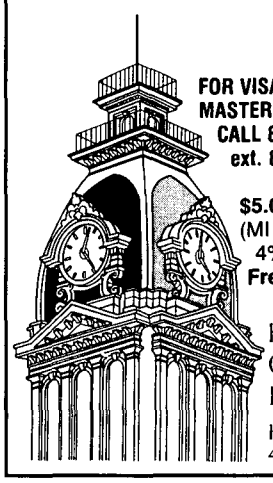

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BOWMAN/AMIS
(continued from page 47)

looking tenderly after her deceased husband's dog although she dislikes the animal intensely, is not immune from the charge of manipulation when she tries a little too hard to persuade Harry to take a job offer from America that would make his fortune but break the social ties and obligations that are equally important to her. Harry thunders at her:

"If you think you can put pressure on me to go to this place by letting it get about that you put pressure on me to go by making me feel I'd been showing you were putting pressure on me to stay if I didn't go, then . . . " For a moment Harry contemplated the elastic cocoon he had spun about himself and finally made do by bawling, "You're wrong!"

Needless to say, he doesn't go, and the non-sexual (despite the insinuations of the unspeakable Desirée) ménage with Clare is preserved. Even the various hangers-on begin, for the thousandth time, to get their acts together by the end. Here at last is something approximating Kern's idyll of "the folks that live on the hill," even though the folks have got there by a route they could never have foreseen in their youth. □

CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 9)

terest being earned comes from the taxpayer.

At some point down the road the Social Security manager sees that for a given time period he is not going to have enough cash coming in from current taxes to cover the required payments. No problem. He goes to the vault and gets out a couple of his super-safe securities and sells them to get the required cash. The purchaser is the tax-payer.

I would like the senator to explain why only under the privatization scenario someone must pay twice.

*—R. D. Bayley*
*Houston, Texas*

**Back-Biting**

I noted, with amusement, the reference to Miss Maia Brodie's derrière ("The Continuing Crisis," *TAS*, July 1990). Unfortunately you did not mention the headline in the late *St. Louis Sun*:

He Bites Hers
She Sues His!

*—William T. Bowles, M.D.*
*Associate Professor of Urology*
*Washington University*
*School of Medicine*
*St. Louis, Missouri*

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### The Great Books Series

Our nation's leading series of travel guides explains why Gunter Grass is always greener on the eastern side of the Berlin Wall:

Its reputation as the Soviet Union's most loyal client state seems well deserved. Moreover, the old adage that only the East Germans could make a success of communism—economically, at any rate—seems hard to refute. . . . East Germany has much to recommend it. What other country of comparable size . . . could so reliably produce so many world-caliber athletes? What other Eastern European state, Romania excepted, would react so coolly to the reforming promise of *glasnost* and *perestroika*? It's not just because the government is so peculiarly inclined toward a pre-Gorbachev form of government, you feel; more that the people themselves seem quite uninterested in swapping their ordered lifestyles for the promise of Western-style freedoms. . . .

Time has not stood still on this side of the border, but it has taken much less of a toll than it has in the West. The rampant overdevelopment that has blighted much of the West German landscape is practically unknown in this people's republic. . . . At heart, perhaps it's this German heritage that explains not only the relative success of communism, but the rather austere nature of the government, too. It's a Prussian inheritance, first and foremost. . . .

But, unlike other Eastern bloc countries, the East German government can point to the fact that Marxist central planning has largely worked in this country, and that the need for reform is accordingly less pronounced.

*[from* Fodor's Germany 1990, *Random House, $15.95 paper]*

### New York

*Mousse au chocolat* raised to the highest level of artistic expression by one of the National Endowment for the Arts' favorite deadbeats:

In the second act, she strips to the skin to "strip" emotionally, baring the self-hate of the body-obsessed, bulimic woman. Slathered in chocolate, she cries, "My life is worth nothing but s---."

Chocolate is a kind of blackface, linking her sympathetically with the underclass. It's the sort of odd dress-up game children play with lipstick and shaving cream. Chocolate is also food, the source of many desperate obsessions among women. Covered in her ceremonial body paint, Finley stirs a collective consciousness of women's shared life from childhood to girlhood and beyond. Gradually she sprinkles on red candies, white alfalfa sprouts, tinsel—until she's fully "clothed" in a perverse, tarty sort of seduction costume. She rages against the demand that a woman's value be measured by her attractiveness to men; yet she plays the game, as women do.

*[August 6, 1990]*

### Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality

An exigent inquiry to Hugh Hefner's favorite intellectual review from—or so it seems—Madonna:

**Postorgasmic perineal muscle spasm**

**Q:** What is the cause of painful perineal muscle spasm postorgasm in a patient whose physical exam is normal?

**A:** Perianal and perineal muscle spasms are normal in orgasm. While such spasms are generally pleasurable, postorgasmic tetany is not. In some individuals, tetany causes severe retroscrotal or perineal pain if the lower bowel holds even a moderate amount of gas. These same persons may have a satisfactory orgasm when no gas is present.

If postorgasmic perineal pain occurs, I instruct the patient to sit on a firm surface and recline at a 45° angle. This position forces the coccyx against the lower intestinal tract and will often allow the trapped gas to escape through the spastic perianal muscles. The relief is immediate once the flatus has passed. The only problem is how to explain to one's partner the need to drop to the floor after sex, lean against a wall, and massage the left lower quadrant.

*[July 1990]*

### Wall Street Journal

Another voice for freedom in the arts rings out, as the febrile Susan P. Woods of the Whitney Museum savages a hero of American letters:

I was outraged that you published and consequently endorsed Dave Shiflett's review "Bookshorts: Help for the Suburban Yard Slave" (Leisure & Arts, July 17). In the guise of a book review on how-to manuals for lawn-mower repairs, the author has found a rather imaginative way to divulge his prehistoric sexist thinking. I am disappointed that the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* did not recognize this rhetoric as offensive bigotry.

The article, based on the premise that man is inherently "oppressed" by woman, is blatantly insolent in its attempt to make a potentially dull subject humorous. It is not difficult to imagine Mr. Shiflett to be a morally inept, social outcast in any slightly progressive society. His article became quickly ineffectual in reviewing the manuals because of the emotional response it provoked by attacking women as being a race of low-IQ slave drivers who sit indoors packing themselves with carbohydrates.

What a pity it must be to live in Mr. Shiflett's world of fat, screaming wives who demand a manicured lawn before they can feel at peace with themselves and their marriages. I find little in common with the people who must live on Mr. Shiflett's little suburban block and I am sure that most of your well-educated and enterprising readers would agree.

*[August 2, 1990]*

### Washington Post

Another beautifully written dithyramb from Prof. Colman McCarthy, albeit with a few drinks aboard and perhaps even some of those little pink pills and a sprig or two of marijuana for reassurance:

Little research is available on the number of women who see vegetarianism as a way of rejecting male domination. But it is hard to imagine that it is only coincidence that a society that has a high rate of spouse abuse is also one that sanctions violence against animals. For one example, the predatory viciousness that motivates male hunters to take to the woods on weekends to kill deer isn't that much different from the meanness that prompts males to be spouse-abusers or wife-beaters. Picking on the weak is the lust in both sports.

*[July 24, 1990]*

### Utne Reader

For those who mutter that Liberalism has seen better days, behold this testimony from a likely Democratic presidential candidate certain to find many eager supporters at the 1992 Democratic convention:

Thank you for publishing several perceptive articles on naming and name changing. My own name change at age 30 was exciting and, in retrospect, among the most insightful and self-caring things I have ever done.

Like many name-changers, I changed my name because *I* changed. The transition followed a difficult and introspective period, after which I was able to accept responsibilities in a way that I could not have in my more turbulent youth. Like the scar of an initiation rite, I wear the name as a symbol of the insights gleaned from that metamorphosis. It is no accident that within a few months of adopting my new name, I switched careers, improved my diet, bought a home, began recycling my trash, and made a commitment to an excellent woman who is now my wife.

It is good that so many parents are now attending carefully to giving their babies the most meaningful and politically correct names. But these parents may later have to accept that the best names will be the ones their children will choose for themselves.

*—Avi Meir Lev*
*Portland, OR*
*[July/August 1990]*

### Pocono Record
(Stroudsburg, PA)

The oldest man in America sounds off:

Re the letters by all of those conservatives out there who feel that they are not being treated fairly by the liberal press:

Conservatives are absolutely correct in assuming that the press and news media are liberal in their ideology; however, they do not seem to understand that this is necessary in order to ensure that individual rights are protected.

To begin with, liberals look at protecting the rights of all minorities: Asians, blacks, the elderly, the handicapped, Hispanics, the homeless, homosexuals, Indians, the poor, women, and those with or without religious beliefs. Furthermore, liberals look to protect the rights of those without a voice: animals and the environment. By having a liberal media, it assures that most of these voices will be heard. Consequently, this is becoming more important as our executive and judicial branches of government become more and more conservative.

It is important to understand that liberals live by the principle that "you don't know someone until you have walked a mile in their shoes." What this means is that a liberal puts himself or herself in someone else's situation to understand their beliefs, ideas, and needs. This method prevents oneself from selfishly applying what they believe to be what is best for a given situation.

Another important aspect of liberal ideology is that one always attempts to use rationality and logic when confronted with a situation; consequently, this means that one tries not to be swept away by emotion. However, this doesn't mean that one totally disregards emotion. Liberals simply try not to allow emotions to color their judgment.

For the above reasons, I feel it is necessary for the press to be liberal in their views. Furthermore, I feel it is a crime that our Supreme Court is now in the hands of the conservatives. You really cannot blame President Bush for this since he is also conservative; however, each individual who voted Bush into office has no excuse. If they had only opened their eyes, they would have realized that the liberals on the Court were aging quickly. I pray that the remaining liberals on the Court can hang on until the 1992 presidential election. Unless this country begins electing some liberal Democratic presidents, I am afraid to think of what will happen to this great country of ours.

*—Christian Sondergaard, Jr.*
*Stroudsburg, PA*
*[July 30, 1990]*

### Wall Street Journal

The ghost of Cyrus Vance offers a new peace initiative:

Thank you for the interview with Saddam Hussein, president of Iraq ("Dictator Speaks," page one, June 28). It provided Arab insights into the Middle East situation that are usually not carried by other major American newspapers. You are to be commended for providing readers with the other side of the story.

President Hussein's suggestion that the U.S. lend atomic weapons to Iraq is of interest. Mutually assured destruction may be the only effective way to prevent aggression in that part of the world.

*—George W. Polhemus*
*Pembroke, NC*
*[July 30, 1990]*



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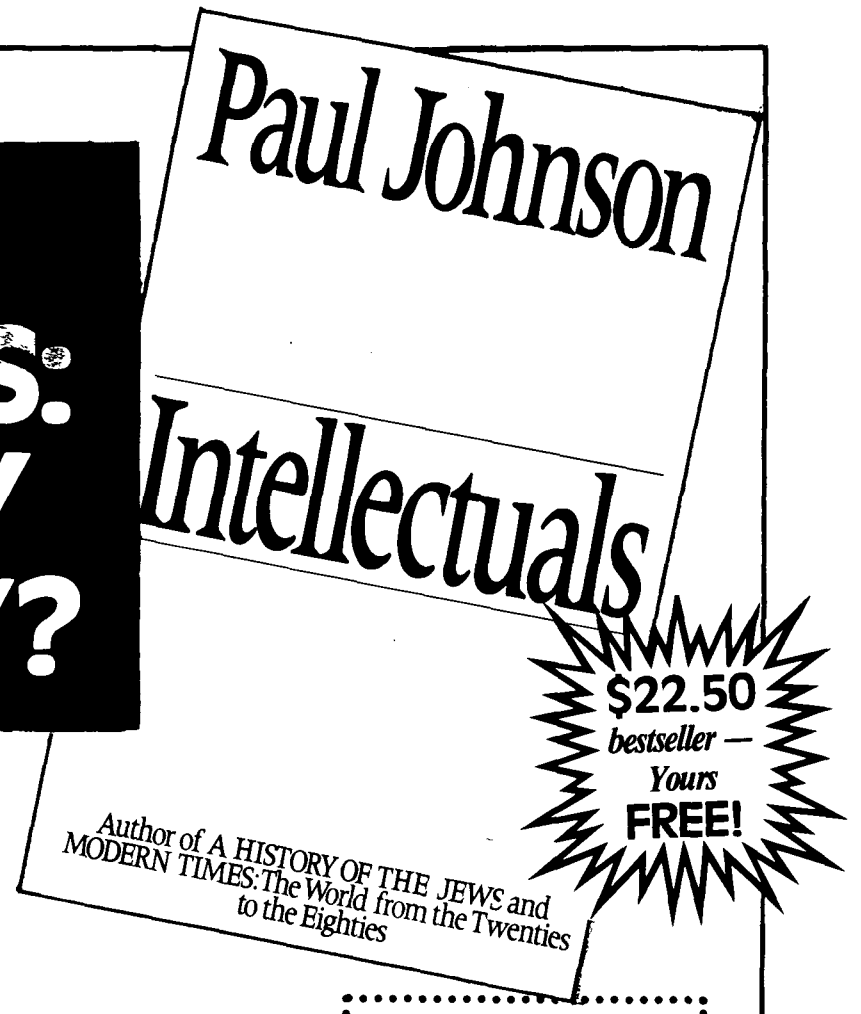


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